THE RELIGION OF THE SPIRIT

ERNEST FREMONT TITTLE

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The Religion of the Spirit

Studies in Faith and Life

By
ERNEST FREMONT TITTLE

Author of
"What Must the Church Do To Be Saved?"

DR. TITTLE has been pastor of the First Methodist Episcopal Church at Evanston, Illinois, for the last nine years, and during that period has not only been the spiritual leader and interpreter of a large congregation, but has been guide, philosopher and friend to a great multitude of students in attendance at Northwestern University and affiliated institutions. These sermons were preached in the Evanston pulpit, and indicate the character of its ministry. They deal with matters that are closely knit into the fabric of human experience in its spiritual, intellectual, moral and social aspects, and make a strong appeal to thoughtful men and women who, buttressed by faith, are seeking after Him who is "the Way, and the Truth, and the Life."

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BY THE SAME AUTHOR

WHAT MUST THE CHURCH DO TO BE SAVED?

The Religion of the Spirit

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By
ERNEST FREMONT TITTLE

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To My Son
JOHN MYERS TITTLE

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I desire to thank the Editor of Good Housekeeping for his kind permission to reprint "The Spiritual Foundation of Peace"; and to thank Professor Harris Franklin Rall, of Garrett Biblical Institute, who read the manuscript before it was submitted to the publishers, and made many valuable suggestions.

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STUDIES IN FAITH

I

THE RELIGION OF THE SPIRIT

Auguste Sabatier made the world his debtor when he published his great book, *Religions of Authority and the Religion of the Spirit.* It has been a long time since I read it, and I am obliged to acknowledge that all I can distinctly recall of it is the title. But that alone is enough to call forth a hymn of praise if only one were able to compose it. The mere recognition of the fact that there are religions of authority and the religion of the spirit is one of those flashes of spiritual insight for which we can never be sufficiently grateful.

There are in the world religions of authority because there are in the world people who feel the need of authority.

In 1839 John Henry Newman was the greatest preacher in the Church of England. In 1846 he was a humble priest in the Church of Rome. In leaving the Anglican communion for the Roman communion he sacrificed a brilliant career. At the time of his going he himself remarked that he was giving up his home, giving up all who had known him, loved him, valued him, and wished him well. Why, then, did he go? Because he felt the need of an external, infallible authority in which to

anchor the faith of his soul, and believed that there was such an authority in Rome. And when, stung by Charles Kingsley's taunt of intellectual dishonesty, Newman wrote his great spiritual autobiography, he could say with perfect sincerity that from the time he became a Catholic he had no further history of his religious opinions to relate. Both doubt and adventure had come to an end. The spirit's sails were furled, its anchor dropped, and in the haven of hierarchical authority the voyager remained content.

Many another human soul, beaten upon by the storms of life, weary of doubt and bitter questioning, has sought refuge in the comfortable sacerdotalism of the Roman Church. "Faith with us," writes a modern Catholic, "means acceptance of divine truth on the authority of God, who has revealed it to us."[1] No uncertainty there, no need of the toils and perils of intellectual discovery. Faith in this case is not a going out, but a staying in. It is not an adventure, it is merely a recitation. And in spite of the fulminations of rabid anti-Catholics, the Roman Church will stand unmoved so long as there are people in the world who prefer the haven of authority to the high seas of spiritual quest.

Roman Catholicism is not the only religion of authority. Not long ago at Princeton Theological Seminary a revered teacher[2] told the members of

[1] Bertrand L. Conway in *Best Sermons*, 1926, edited by Joseph Fort Newton, p. 140. Harcourt, Brace and Company, publishers.
[2] J. Gresham Machen, in *Best Sermons*, 1926, p. 117.

a graduating class that, although all parts of the Bible are not equally valuable, all parts are equally true. The authority which the Catholic finds in his church many a Protestant finds in his Bible. The one feels secure in an infallible institution, the other with an infallible book. In this case the Protestant, no less than the Catholic, is delivered from doubt and from the pain involved in the pursuit of truth. The great questions of life and death are definitely answered. "Faith with us," such an one might say, "is the acceptance of divine truth on the authority of God, who has revealed it to us in the Scriptures." And notwithstanding the findings of scholarship and the discoveries of science, Fundamentalism in some form will not only survive, but flourish so long as there are people in the world who would rather feel certain than find truth.

Religions of authority there always have been, are now, and always will be, because they meet the needs of a certain type of human mind—the mind that craves certainty, enjoys conformity, and loves to "stay put."

But some men appear to be born for a life of adventure. Says Tennyson's "Ulysses":

> "Come, my friends,
> 'Tis not too late to seek a newer world.
> . . . . . my purpose holds
> To sail beyond the sunset and the baths
> Of all the western stars, until I die."

He counts the cost:

"It may be that the gulfs will wash us down."

But he does not shrink, for

"It may be we shall touch the Happy Isles
And see the great Achilles, whom we knew."

Here, then, is a very different type of mind. And the mind whose purpose holds to sail beyond the sunset in persistent quest of truth would hardly feel comfortable in the Roman Church. The mind that is so eager to touch the Happy Isles of Reality that it is not deterred by boisterous seas could hardly be content to settle down in the unimaginative literalism, the unadventurous dogmatism of Fundamentalism. For this type of mind the only religion that offers any attraction, any nourishment and comfort, is the religion of the spirit.

I

The religion of the spirit is rooted, not in authority, but in experience.

The author of a recently published article in the *Atlantic Monthly* reports an imaginary conversation between a bishop and a dean. "It is quite time," says the bishop, "that these disturbing speculations were laid aside and we returned to the recognition of properly constituted authority." To which the dean replies that the present tumult in the religious world is likely to continue, for we are in a period of transition from authority to experience. Many of us undoubtedly are.

Here is a young fellow who leaves home and goes to college. At home on a Sunday morning he went,

as a matter of course, to church. In college, after a month or two, he falls into the habit of certain of his fellow students who try to recover on Sunday morning the sleep they have lost on Saturday night. At times his conscience causes him a little pain, but almost anybody, if he puts his mind to it, can discover a reason for doing what he is doing and wants to do. So presently he makes the discovery that he never did get very much out of churchgoing anyway. The sermon, as often as not, was uninteresting. The anthem suggested, if not "all instincts immature, all purposes unsure," at least a considerable number of notes that were a bit uncertain. The whole service was something of a bore. Why, therefore, shouldn't a student sleep late on Sunday morning, especially if he was out late on Saturday night?

Presently, also, he begins to question not only the value of the church, but the validity of religion itself. Beliefs which it had never occurred to him to question, which he had never supposed any respectable person did or could question, he does question. But, as Stevenson says in his *Child's Garden of Verses*, "The world is so full of a number of things, I'm sure we should all be as happy as kings." The college world, certainly, is full of a number of things, absorbing things, and for a year or two, maybe longer, he is happier than kings are likely to be under present conditions. He does not worry very much about anything, certainly not about his religious faith. He is so content with

life's present values that he feels no urge to ask whether it has any eternal values.

But this unruffled contentment with life does not last. He begins, after a while, to feel fed up on—a number of things, and to wonder whether transient satisfactions are the only kind of satisfaction which life affords. Is life merely a matter of eating and drinking and making merry? If it is . . .

So it comes to pass that this student, who supposed that religion was the least of his concerns, makes the discovery that it is, on the contrary, the greatest of all his concerns. He enters into the experience of another student, Edward Rowland Sill, who came out of Yale with a great question mark in his life and confided in a letter to a friend, "People think that a man's speculations about religion interfere with his daily life very little—but how certain conclusions do take the shine out of one's existence!" Then, one day, he makes for himself that greatest of all discoveries which the human spirit has ever made. In the beauty of the world, in the nobility of noble lives, in the silent depths of his own life, he discovers God. And note, now, what has happened. He has passed from authority to experience, from a faith inherited to a faith achieved, from a theology handed down to a religion built up in his own soul.

Is not that what a considerable number of men and women in our generation are doing? At the request of the editor of one of our enterprising magazines, a number of outstanding churchmen have

been telling us why they are Episcopalians, or Methodists, or Baptists, or whatever else they denominationally are. Most of them frankly confess that they belong now to the religious fold in which they were born, and that they belong to it because they were born in it.

Most of the rest of us who belong to any religious fold would probably feel obliged to make a similar acknowledgment. But it does not follow that we are prepared to accept without question everything which our ecclesiastical shepherds hand out to us. Pius IX once remarked that before he became Pope he believed in infallibility; afterward he felt it. Many of us do not even believe in it. We cannot conceive of an infallible Pope, or an infallible board of bishops, or an infallible general assembly. Not now. And those ecclesiastical councils that fashioned the historic creeds—what reason have we to suppose that they were any more free from human limitations than modern ecclesiastical councils have shown themselves to be? And going still further back, what reason have we to suppose that the men who wrote the Old and New Testament Scriptures were in every case and in every respect incapable of error? They themselves did not profess to be.

But enough of this. I fear that I am beginning to argue a case, whereas all that I started out to do was to state a fact, namely, that a very considerable number of men and women in our generation are at least attempting to pass from authority to expe-

rience. For them there is no external, infallible authority. But they, no more than obedient Catholics, no more than unquestioning fundamentalists, can live by bread alone. They too are tempted at times, and lonely, and discouraged, and hard-hit. They too need the power, the comfort, the inspiration, of religious faith—"a belief," as Franklin K. Lane put it in one of his letters, "in something bigger than ourselves and more lasting than the world." But faith for them, if it is to be a vital thing, must be rooted in something more substantial than ecclesiastical or even biblical authority. It must be rooted in an actual experience of the reality of God. It cannot be a religion of authority. It can be only the religion of the spirit.

II

The religion of the spirit admits of a progressive revelation. One of the obvious disadvantages of any religion of authority is that it ties you, hand and foot, to the past. The Westminster Confession explicitly states that God's former ways of revealing himself have ceased. God has, apparently, nothing more to say. And lest anyone suppose that the Westminster Confession is no longer taken seriously, let me refer again to that address which was delivered a short time ago to the members of a graduating class in Princeton Theological Seminary. The theme chosen for the occasion was, "Prophets, False and True," and, of course, the speaker urged his hearers to be true prophets, not

false. "But," said he, "in one sense I admit you cannot be prophets at all . . . true prophecy in the supernatural, biblical sense does not exist to-day; like other miracles, it has ceased."

By way of contrast, recall those famous lines of James Russell Lowell:

"Slowly the Bible of the race is writ,
And not on paper leaves nor leaves of stone;
Each age, each kindred, adds a verse to it,
Texts of despair or hope, of joy or moan.
While swings the sea, while mists the mountains shroud,
While thunder's surges burst on cliffs of cloud,
Still at the prophets' feet the nations sit."

Religions of authority give you a sense of security, but take away from you a sense of freedom. You are not free to believe what may be spoken. You are free to believe only what has been spoken. Nay, you are required to believe it. Scientific theories which were exploded centuries ago, ethical standards which the enlightened conscience of the world has long since repudiated, religious conceptions which no longer satisfy the aspiring heart of the race—all these you are required to accept. Not to accept them would be to undermine that authority which has given you your sense of security. In order to retain your sense of security you must be prepared to outrage your sense of truth. A big price to pay.

The religion of the spirit leaves you free to follow truth whithersoever it may take you. It does not merely lead you back to a God who once spoke.

It does not leave you tied hand and foot to biblical science and mediæval theology. It leads you into the presence of a God who is still speaking and who may, perchance, have something to say to your generation which other generations were unable to hear.

What an inspiring conception it is—this notion of a growing Bible, this frank and joyful recognition of the fact that not only in Scriptures written in the Hebrew tongue and not only in Scriptures written in the Greek tongue, but also in Scriptures written in the English tongue, in the German tongue, in the Russian tongue, and in the tongues of the Orient, many authentic words from God may be found; that not only in the literature produced between the eighth century before Christ and the second century after Christ, but in some part at least of contemporary literature do prophets speak! And what a relief it is to discover that a sense of security may be had without cost to one's sense of truth! It may be had without recourse to those religions of authority which take a man back to the past and leave him there, cowering in the presence of every new discovery, afraid of science, distrustful of truth. An even greater sense of security may be had through actual experience of the living God, for in that event every fresh discovery is hailed as another revelation, and science is seen to be one of the mediums through which the Eternal Mind reveals itself, and truth is recognized as the very tabernacle of the Most High.

III

But the sense of security which is born of spiritual experience can be had on no easy terms.

One reason for the absence of religious certainty is the absence of that courageous living on high levels out of which religious certainty has historically come. The men who have written Scriptures have done something more difficult than memorize Scripture. The men who have discovered God have done something more heroic than talk about God. The man who wrote, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee," was not an ecclesiastical politician. The man who wrote, "I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth shall be able to separate us from the love of God," was not a safety-first type of missionary, claiming the right of extra-territoriality. The Man who prayed, "Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit" died on a cross for his convictions. If we, to-day, try to enter into such men's experience of divine reality without paying the price which they paid to have such experience, is it to be wondered at that we meet with disappointment?

The man who merely learns by rote what other men have learned in travail and pain, who is content merely to talk about things which other men have bravely attempted, bears much the same relation to a great saint as does the speaker of pieces to a great orator, or the movie hero to the

real thing. And it is simply impossible that life's supreme experiences should ever be his. In the world of finance it may be possible at times to get something for nothing, but not in the world of spirit. There you must pay for what you get.

One of the easiest and deadliest ways for a man to fool himself is to praise a hero instead of trying to become one.

Here, for instance, is Saint Francis of Assisi, whom, seven hundred years after his death, everybody praises, even the militant followers of Mussolini. Francis had no faith in the sword, he cared nothing for wealth; yet militarists applaud him—and clamor for additional cruisers; and millionaires pay homage to him—and labor to increase their pile. Here also is Abraham Lincoln, of whom a multitude to-day are ready to declare that his name is above every name in American history. He lived and died singularly free from spite and bitterness, "with malice toward none, with charity for all." And he is lauded to the skies by persons who still hate Germany as he never hated the South. Here, most strikingly of all, is Jesus, whose name, by almost universal consent, is above every name in all history, and we crown him with many crowns. We crown him the Lord of love. We crown him the Lord of peace. We crown him the Lord of years, the Potentate of time. We bring forth the royal diadem and crown him Lord of all. Then we go on laying up treasures on earth and demanding an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth.

To praise a hero—that is easy. Praise, like many another form of talk, is proverbially cheap. But to be a hero, to be like the hero whose praise we have sung —that is another matter, an immeasurably more difficult matter. But merely to praise a hero and never to be one is to miss the supreme experiences of life.

I was reading the other day that daring saying of Saint Paul, "I live, yet no longer I, but Christ liveth in me," and suddenly it occurred to me that that represents an experience which any man might have. I found myself wondering how it would feel to have such an experience, to be able in all humility but in utter truth to say that one's own spirit had become indistinguishable from the spirit of Christ. I recalled that beautiful tribute which Clement of Alexandria paid to Jesus, "He has turned all our sunsets into sunrise." Which set me to wondering still more: What would happen if increasing numbers of men and women should be able in all humility but in sober truth to say, "Christ liveth in me"? Would not the threatened sunset of civilization be turned into sunrise? Instead of fear, faith; instead of despair, hope; instead of hate, love; instead of war, peace.

Could we have the spirit of Christ? Undoubtedly we could if only we were willing to pay the price for it.

IV

The last thing which I should like to suggest about the religion of the spirit is that it is the only kind of religion which can ever unite the world.

Religions of authority inevitably divide men. They insist upon uniformity of belief, and when it comes to those supreme concerns which lie beyond the reach of scientific investigation, uniformity of belief is impossible. They insist upon uniformity of worship, and when it comes to the means by which the human soul shall strive to realize the presence of the Eternal, uniformity is impossible; to one person the odor of incense is a means of grace, to another person it is merely a nuisance. They insist, likewise, upon uniformity of organization, each claiming divine authority for its own form of government. And is it not expecting entirely too much of human nature to suppose that one group of divinely ordained ecclesiastical politicians will ever consent to step down and out in favor of any other group? On a basis of uniformity the world will never be united.

The religion of the spirit does not demand uniformity. It does not demand uniformity of organization; it is not interested primarily in organization. It is ready to approve any type of institution which will shelter and not suffocate the life of the soul. Nor does it demand uniformity of worship. It says to the Episcopalian, "The beauty of your service is well adapted to you," and to the Quaker, "The simplicity of your service is suited to you." Nor does it demand uniformity of belief. It rejoices in the devout Catholic who exhibits the spirit of Christ; it values the sincere Fundamentalist who bears the image of Christ; it extends the

hand of fellowship to the reverent Unitarian who walks in the way of Christ. What the religion of the spirit is seeking is not uniformity, but unity. And on the basis of unity, unity of spirit, of passion, and of purpose, the world slowly but surely is being united.

We sing,

"For the love of God is broader
Than the measure of man's mind;
And the heart of the Eternal
Is most wonderfully kind."

The religion of the spirit has claimed a hymn written by a devout Roman Catholic. We sing,

Nearer, my God, to thee,
Nearer to thee!
E'en though it be a cross
That raiseth me."

The religion of the spirit has accepted a hymn written by a reverent Unitarian. Religions of authority harden into creeds, and creeds divide us. The religion of the spirit bursts into song, and song unites us.

Note also what is happening to-day in the case of increasing numbers of men and women who have in them that mind which was also in Christ Jesus. Are they not quietly ignoring differences of creed, peculiarities of worship, denominational divisions, and laboring together to build on earth the city of God? Is it not even true that there is developing in the world a fellowship of souls that transcends all

boundaries of race and nation and color and creed? The religion of the spirit places the hand of Bishop Fisher in the hand of Mahatma Gandhi and pronounces the binding word, "Brother."

II

THE IMAGE OF GOD

Men have always spoken of Jesus in superlative terms. In their efforts to appraise him they have employed the thought forms of their own age; and thought forms change. But how significant the fact that, in every age, the terms in which men have spoken of Jesus have been the highest terms which they knew how to employ!

To the primitive Jewish Christians he was the *Messiah*. Just what this word meant to them it is difficult at this distance to say. It had, no doubt, different meanings for different individuals. But amid much that is obscure, if not fantastic, at least one fact is clear and arresting: for the first century Jew the word *Messiah* embodied the very highest of hopes. In the person of the *Messiah*, the almighty God would not only reveal himself but assert himself. In some supernatural fashion he would deliver his people from their Roman bondage. He would make crooked ways straight and rough places smooth. He would restore the glory of the days of David; aye, more than that, he would create a new heaven and a new earth in which the most daring dreams of prophetic spirits would be realized. When, therefore, the earliest Jewish Christians applied to Jesus the word *Mes-*

siah they declared their faith that through him the hopes of centuries would be fulfilled.

To the primitive Gentile Christians Jesus was *Lord* and *Master*. Professor McGiffert thinks that many of these first converts from the Gentile world accepted Jesus as Lord without accepting Jehovah as God.[1] Their primary interest was not in the Jewish God but, rather, in the Jewish Saviour. As to who was the creator and ruler of the universe they did not trouble themselves to inquire; that was a question for the philosophers to decide, not plain folk who might take the universe for granted and go about their business. But plain folk must have a religion even though they were content to get along without a theology. To the Lord of some cult they must become devoted whoever might be the supreme creator or creators of the world; otherwise, their lives would be like the surge of the sea driven by the winds and tossed. Well, there were the Syrian Adonis, and the Phrygian Attis, and the Egyptian Serapis, and many another saviour deity, each with his missionaries to commend him; but in steadily increasing numbers the plain folk of that ancient Gentile world turned to the Jewish Jesus, for he satisfied their deepest needs as did no other deity who had been brought to their attention. They chose the highest when they saw it, and to him who embodied it they gave their noblest name—*Lord*. And when at last, under the guidance of their teachers, they passed beyond the

[1] See his *The God of the Early Christians*, Chap. II.

Jewish Saviour to the Jewish God, they still expressed their boundless devotion to the former by calling him the *Son of God.*

To a considerable number of educated converts from the Græco-Roman world Jesus was the *Logos.* The exact meaning of this word twentieth century minds can only with difficulty recapture. It was a technical term employed by philosophers who believed that God in himself could never be known by finite creatures, that only through an intermediary (the *Logos*) could he establish any relation with the world of men. Under the influence of this philosophy God himself tended to become a mere abstraction, and emotional interest was transferred from him to the Logos. How significant, then, the fact that many a graduate of the ancient philosophic schools identified the *Logos* with Jesus of Nazareth!

Now the word *Messiah* does not come naturally to modern lips. In fact, the notion of a sudden, catastrophic creation of a new heaven and a new earth, through some supernatural Messianic agency, can no longer be entertained by minds that have grown accustomed to the thought of an evolutionary process. The word *Logos*, likewise, has passed away along with the world-view that created it. Only *Lord* and *Master* and *Son of God* remain in current use, and even they with connotations somewhat different from those which they possessed for first- and second-century minds. But consider this: although nineteen centuries have come and gone since that fateful day when an unseeing crowd

cried, "Ha! thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself," the highest hopes of a very large portion of mankind are still associated with Jesus.

Here, for instance, is George Bernard Shaw, who is nothing if not candid; whose jibes at conventional Christianity are despicable or delicious, according to one's point of view; yet who says, "I am ready to admit that after contemplating the world and human nature for nearly sixty years, I see no way out of the world's misery but the way which would have been found by Christ's will if he had undertaken the work of a practical statesman." The terms in which a man like Shaw does his thinking are not the terms in which first-century Jews or second-century Greeks did theirs. His whole world-view is decidedly different from theirs! Yet this ultra-modern man associates his highest hopes—as they did theirs—with Jesus. He can see no way out of our present predicament but the way that might be found by Christ's spirit addressing itself to the tasks of statesmanship. Thought forms different, world-view different; for Copernicus and his successors have given him a new conception of the heavens, and Darwin and his successors have given him a new conception of the earth. But ask him, "In whom to-day do you center your hopes?" and lo, nineteen centuries fade away, and he is found standing with Peter and James and John and Clement of Alexandria in the presence of Jesus.

I

What was Jesus of Nazareth? Someone has said that every great man condemns those who come after him to the task of explaining him. If that be true of a man like Leonardo da Vinci, how much more true is it of a man who, born in a cattle shed, and brought up in a carpenter's home, has, during nineteen centuries, drawn to himself the faith and love of increasing numbers of people, made it necessary for them to think of him in terms of their highest concepts, and prompted them to associate him with their highest hopes!

Let us begin by saying that Jesus was a man. How odd that sentence sounds! But I can imagine a sentence that would sound odder still. Suppose you should ask me, "What was Abraham Lincoln, that strange son of Thomas Lincoln and Nancy Hanks, who climbed from a windowless log cabin in the backwoods of Kentucky to the executive mansion in Washington, and became 'the pillar of a nation's hope, the center of a world's desire'?" and I should reply, "Let us begin by saying that he was a man." Would not that statement sound odder still? Is there any other person known to history of whom it is necessary for us to remind ourselves that he was a man? But in Jesus' case it is necessary. So difficult has it been to account for him in the light of his heredity, or of his environment, and to find a place for him in any normal human category, that men have ever concluded, He was not really human; he was altogether divine!

But consider now to what tragically disappointing results this conclusion leads. If you tell me that Jesus was not human in the same sense in which I myself am human, must I not reply to you in something like dismay: "You have taken away the Captain of my soul. I had hoped that some day I might become pure enough and brave enough to follow him. I had even dared to hope that some day I might become like him. But if the category to which I belong is essentially different from the category to which he belongs, I can no more hope to follow him than a plow-horse may hope to soar after an eagle; I can no more hope to become like him than a blade of grass may hope to resemble a sequoia."

In *The People of the Abyss* Jack London tells us how he put on some old clothes, sewed a sovereign in his vest, and went over to East London to see how it felt to live under such conditions as prevail there. He made friends of two men who were out of work, and he and they got along famously together until one day when there was no money left for food, he produced the sovereign, and was challenged to explain how he had gotten it; "Whereupon," he says, "they shut up like clams. I was not of their kind." If Jesus was not really human, he was not of our kind, and if not of our kind, hardly a source of inspiration to us!

In Venice, your guide for the Doge's Palace leads you to the famous Bridge of Sighs. Then he conducts you down a very narrow stairway and shows

you those dark and dreadful dungeons which remain to-day as mute evidence of the awful cruelty that stained the brilliance of the Venetian republic. And he tells you that Lord Byron once had himself shut up for three hours in one of these dungeons in order that he might actually experience the pitiful plight of the men who were entombed there. But knowing, as Byron did, that he would be let out in time for dinner, and that he would spend the night in a comfortable hotel, how could he enter into the experience of men who were compelled to live in one of those dismal tombs for ten years, twenty years, or until death mercifully delivered them? If Jesus was not really exposed to the conditions which prevail in our human world, but only appeared to be exposed to them; if, for instance, he was never really hungry, or tempted, or in doubt, or in pain, it is difficult to see how he could be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and equally difficult to see how we could find inspiration in his career. If he was never really tempted, but only appeared to be tempted, then he never really triumphed, but only appeared to triumph. His character, however beautiful, remains as morally meaningless as the Apollo Belvidere!

Let us insist, then, that Jesus was a man. Was he *only* a man? With this familiar question many earnest minds are still wrestling; but I put it in order to say that in my judgment it ought no longer to be put. It is a confusing, misleading question which obscures the real issue with respect to Jesus.

There was a time when this question was perfectly natural and, indeed, inevitable. When men believed that what was divine could not be human and what was human could not be divine, then of course they felt bound to ask, What of Jesus? To which category does he belong—the divine or the human? Is he God, or only man? When Christian theologians decided that the humanity of Jesus must be asserted, that not to assert it would be to disregard and discredit the gospel narratives in which it is so obviously and continuously assumed, they found themselves confronted by a truly dreadful dilemma: If Jesus was human, how could he be divine? But if divinity was not to be found in Jesus, where under the shining stars was it to be found? How undeniable the fact that Jesus had had for a multitude of people the value of God! In him they had found light for their darkness, strength for their weakness, courage for their fears, and deliverance from their sin. If, then, to deny his humanity was to disregard and discredit the Christian records, to deny his divinity was to disregard and discredit the Christian experience. And so, in an age when men found it all but impossible to believe that divinity could be present in humanity, although they finally conceded that Jesus was a man, they felt compelled to add, "But not only a man." And if you, gentle or critical reader, had lived in the fourth, or even the sixteenth century, would you not have considered that you ought to go to the stake rather than affirm anything less of

Jesus? If I believed that divinity could not reside in humanity, I would need to hold that Jesus was not "only a man," for he is the divinest fact I know.

But this is the twentieth century, and men no longer believe that Deity and humanity are divorced to such an extent that what is divine cannot be human and what is human cannot be divine. On the contrary, they are prepared to believe that it is precisely in the lives of the noblest representatives of their own race that the most authentic and encouraging revelations of God may be found. When, therefore, they say that Jesus was a man, they do not—at least they should not—feel it necessary to add that he was "not only a man," in order to express their conviction that iu him the very God became incarnate. To say that Jesus was a man, but not only a man is to make him a problem, at once baffling for the imagination and troublesome for the moral life. But to say that in this man the eternal God was completely revealed; that, in the language of Saint Paul, Jesus of Nazareth was "the image of the invisible God," is to say something which, if only we really believed it, would become a hallelujah chorus in our hearts.

II

Now, at last, we are face to face with the real issue with respect to Jesus: not, Is he only a man? but, Is this man an authentic portrait of the unseen God? Jesus himself declared, "He that beholdeth me beholdeth him that sent me." Is that true? *When we behold Jesus do we behold God?*

Candid persons feel obliged to admit that life is full of apparent contradictions. Some would feel inclined to say hideous contradictions. Life manifests itself not only as a loving mother, but as the tubercle bacillus which sometimes slays a loving mother. It manifests itself not only as a heroic missionary who gives his life for Japan, but as a blind, insensate earthquake that in a few terrible hours blots out several hundred thousand Japanese. It manifests itself not only as a patriot who risks his life for his country, but as a profiteer who enriches himself at the expense of his country. Mothers and mosquitoes, babies and bacilli, George Washington and Benedict Arnold, Father Damien becoming a leper in order to serve lepers and the loose-lipped frequenter of unmentionable places whose leprosy is not physical but moral—all these are manifestations of life. What, then, is a man to make of a world that presents to him so many wildly contradictory aspects?

In some quarters to-day to acknowledge yourself an idealist is to run no small risk of having people regard you as a fool. And to go so far as to express the hope that some day the war drums shall sound no longer in a parliament of man, a federation of the world, is to run no small risk of having some one dub you a particular kind of a fool. A big, if not great, newspaper comes out boldly with the suggestion that the Sermon on the Mount is beautiful as poetry, but unworkable as ethics, and that any attempt to work it interna-

tionally would spell disaster! As for the notion that One is our Father and all of us are brothers, read Madison Grant, or Lothrop Stoddard, to be told what nonsense that is. As for the notion that love is mightier than hate, that spiritual forces are more effective than battleships, that intelligently directed good will is more defensive than the observance of irritating "defense days"—well, I have in my possession a considerable collection of letters which tell me what sentimental rot that is!

But now, to come to the point, has idealism, Christian idealism, any sanction in the constitution of the world? Is Jesus of Nazareth an authentic revelation of the very heart of Reality? When we behold Jesus do we behold God? That is the supreme question which is set before the minds of living men and women. Compared with it, all other questions, including those over which mere creedalists shake their rhetorical fists at one another, are as a puddle compared with the Pacific! And there are, so far as I am able to see, but two answers which may be given to this question. In most cases, I should hesitate to commit myself to an "either—or," for, in most cases, an "either—or" turns out to be a "both—and"; but in this case, there seems to me to be a real alternative. Either we must answer with the thoroughgoing materialist that the universe, essentially, is mud, or we must answer with the thoroughgoing Christian that the universe, essentially, is mind—and the mind, the spirit, of Jesus. David crying, "Create

in me a clean heart"; Saint Paul declaring, "The greatest of these is love"; Jesus praying, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do"; Luther exclaiming, "It is both hazardous and dishonorable for a man to act contrary to the dictates of conscience—here I stand, I cannot do otherwise, God help me"; Wesley saying, "The world is my parish"; Lincoln writing, "With malice toward none, with charity for all"; Edith Cavell saying, "Patriotism is not enough; there must be no hatred or bitterness toward anyone"—it may all be but a curious manifestation of chemical activity. But if it is not that, it is such a revelation of the heart of Reality as may well cause flippant scoffers at Christian idealism to put to themselves some searching questions, and Christian idealists themselves to hold up their heads unabashed and unafraid.

"God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, Begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made"—so runs the mighty Nicene Creed which ought always to be preceded by a blare of trumpets, and followed by a long moment of utter silence during which the heart may fortify itself with the faith which the lips have spoken. This creed, like every other historic formulation of Christian experience, was born of controversy, and the issues which determined its phrasing are now known only to the special student of theology. If the men of Nicea were living to-day, and were met in solemn assembly to formulate a creed that would express the

deepest convictions of their own hearts, would they employ the same phraseology? Hardly; for the issues are no longer the same. Not the issues. But the issue—the supreme issue? Ah, that is the same! *When we behold Jesus, do we behold God?*—that was and is the supreme issue. And as then, so now, what it involves is human hope or human despair. If when we behold Jesus we do not behold God; if Jesus is not an authentic revelation of what lies at the heart of things—I was about to say, "God help us!" but is there in that case any God who could help us? What answer to the militarist who calls for increasing armaments? What answer to the imperialist who claims the right to exploit a backward people? And what answer to those plain folk who still ask for a Saviour? But if when we behold Jesus we do behold God, we may dare to put our trust, not in reeking tube and iron shard, but in intelligently directed good will. We may dare to plead for justice in the dealings of the strong with the weak. We may say to our terribly tempted fellows, and to our own fearful hearts, "There is One who is able to deliver you." For if Jesus is "the image of the invisible God," the universe is on the side of the angels; the stars in their courses are fighting against oppression; and each one of us in time of need may draw near with boldness unto the throne of grace.

III

IF GOD IS LIKE CHRIST

"He that hath seen me hath seen the Father."—*John 14. 9.*

". . . the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."—*2 Corinthians 4. 6.*

It is always a bit hazardous to point a contrast between one generation and another. The number of exceptions threatens to disprove the rule. But is there not, perhaps, an element of truth in the suggestion that, whereas our fathers were concerned about the deity of Christ, we are concerned about the Christlikeness of God? They assumed the existence of God, and asked questions about the person of Christ We assume the glory of Christ, and ask questions about the character of God. They wondered whether Jesus was like God. We wonder whether God is like Jesus.

My purpose here is not to argue the belief that God is like Christ, but, rather, to consider some of the implications of this belief. If it be true that we have seen "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ," what follows? Has theology at this present moment any greater or more important task than to answer that question?

It is, I should say, only too evident that, in times past, the implications of belief in a God who is

like Christ were not faced by many who avowed it. One recalls that famous and literally dreadful sermon preached by Jonathan Edwards on "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God," and wonders how it could possibly have been delivered by a man who believed that there was anything Christlike in the heart of the Eternal. One recalls the damnatory clause of the Athanasian Creed, and wonders how a clause of this character could ever have been framed by a group of theologians who considered that Jesus spoke truly when he said, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." One recalls not a few hymns whose morbid, not to say gruesome, sentiments cause one to wonder how their authors could also subscribe to the belief that the inmost nature of God is revealed in the soul of Christ. And listening to-day to the conversation of sincere and earnest Christians who, nevertheless, reveal some of the most astonishing prejudices and animosities with respect to other religious and racial groups, one cannot but suspect that there is, even yet, a very considerable number of persons who have never considered the implications of their own hope that God is like Christ.

Here, then, is an uncompleted task, challenging to the utmost the intellectual resource and spiritual insight of modern Christians. Who is sufficient for it? Not, certainly, the preacher of this sermon. But inadequate as this present attempt is bound to be, it may perhaps serve to direct attention to a most important question.

I

If God is like Christ, what becomes of that theory of biblical inspiration which insists that from Genesis to Revelation the Bible speaks with but a single voice—the veritable voice of God himself? In the eleventh chapter of the book of Exodus you find these words attributed to Jehovah: "About midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt; and all the first-born in the land of Egypt shall die, from the first-born of Pharaoh that sitteth upon his throne, even unto the first-born of the maid-servant that is behind the mill; and all the first-born of cattle. And there shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as there hath not been, nor shall be any more." Is this the utterance of a Christlike God? In the second book of Samuel you find it stated that Jehovah directed David to take a census of the people of Israel, and then became angry when his direction was carried out—so angry, indeed, that he sent a pestilence that wiped out seventy thousand people. Is that the action of a Christlike God? In the twelfth chapter of Genesis you find Abram in Egypt, palming off his wife as his sister, lest her beauty tempt some Egyptian sheik to kill him in order to possess her. You find Pharaoh becoming enamored of this "sister," and dealing gently and generously with Abram on her account. Then you read, "And Jehovah plagued Pharaoh and his house with great plagues because of Sarai, Abram's wife." Is this the picture of a Christlike God?

What is at fault here is not the Bible. The Bible is the record of a race in its passionate, persistent quest of God. Behold a race in travail—sweating, groaning, questioning, despairing, beseeching, blaspheming, sinning, repenting, suffering, striving, until at last it gives to the world that incomparable odyssey of the human soul, that matchless record of moral and spiritual discovery which we call the Bible. What is at fault here is not the Bible, but only a theory about the Bible. The Bible does not speak with but a single voice. By no sort of torturing exegesis can it be made to appear that the God who is pictured in certain portions of the Old Testament is the same God who is pictured in the New.

It does not follow that the Old Testament is of no value to the modern world.

> "Jehovah is my shepherd; I shall not want.
> He maketh me to lie down in green pastures;
> He leadeth me beside still waters.
> He restoreth my soul."

Is that of no value to weary moderns? "What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" Is that of no value to twentieth-century Americans? Consider the Old Testament as a whole. Concede it to be what it so obviously is—a collection of myths, folk lore, legal and historical writings, poems and prophecies, in which from primitive conceptions one passes to some of the most splendid ideas

and ideals that have ever taken possession of the mind and heart of the race. Would not the Old Testament as a whole, if so regarded, prove of inestimable value, not only to the student of ethics and religion, but to any earnest and aspiring spirit?

It is not the Bible, nor any portion of it, that needs to be abandoned. Long after you and I and all our contemporaries have gone the way of all the earth, the Bible will continue to inspire and comfort the hearts of men. What does need to be abandoned is a theory about the Bible which would commit the modern world to a primitive science, an immature ethic, and to conceptions of God which are clearly in conflict with the noblest of all conceptions which the Bible itself has given to the race, the suggestion, namely, that God is like Christ.

One feels at this point a special concern with respect to the message of the modern missionary. Undoubtedly, the most precious gift which our Western world has to offer the East is the character of Jesus, and the faith that in the face of Jesus Christ we have seen the light of the knowledge of the glory of God. What a pity it would be if, instead of offering this gift, we should offer a theory about the Bible which would appear to provide a divine sanction for scientific views which we ourselves are outgrowing, and ethical standards which we are deploring, and religious conceptions which we consider naïve and primitive. Can you imagine anything more tragic than the gift to a Chinese general

of a theory of biblical inspiration which might encourage him to believe that he himself was a modern Joshua whom the Almighty had commissioned to massacre the army of a rival aspirant for political power? Shall we handicap the development of China with a theory from whose baneful influences we ourselves are beginning to escape, or shall we frankly acknowledge that this theory is a heavy burden and grievous to be borne which ought no longer to be laid upon the minds of men?

II

If God is like Christ, what becomes of certain theological conceptions which men once held and some still hold?

In one of his sermons, Henry Ward Beecher describes the anguish felt by early New England fathers and mothers when confronted by the suggestion that some of their children might be predestined to be saved, and others just as certainly predestined to be lost. One recalls, also, that awful belief once cherished by men who were themselves kind-hearted, the belief that unbaptized infants were doomed to suffer eternal torment. Think of Jesus saying, "Suffer the little children to come unto me; forbid them not: for to such belongeth the kingdom of God." Then think of a group of solemn-faced theologians and ecclesiastics deciding that a certain rite called baptism is so essential to the soul's eternal welfare that, unless it is administered, even innocent little babies will be forever damned.

Would it ever have been possible for civilized persons to come to so grotesque a conclusion if only they had considered the implications of their own faith that God is like Jesus? How glad one is to learn that when, at last, a General Assembly was found with sufficient moral insight and moral courage to repudiate the doctrine of eternal damnation of unbaptized infants, one member rose up to move that the decision of the Assembly be made retroactive!

Even yet there are persons who cherish the belief that the soul's eternal destiny is fixed at death, that for all who die impenitent there is no hope. I have even heard a professed Christian repeat with evident satisfaction the saying, "Avenge not yourselves, beloved, but give place unto the wrath *of God:* for it is written, Vengeance belongeth unto me; I will recompense, saith the Lord." On his lips this famous saying of Saint Paul appeared to suggest the not unpleasant thought that one did not need to go to the trouble of getting even with one's enemies, God would take care of that! I found myself thinking of Tertullian, that fierce-hearted third-century leader of the North African church, who comforted himself with the belief that a day was coming when Christians would be changed into the likeness of angels, and all their persecutors would be cast into a burning fiery furnace, to suffer eternally the torment to which, for a few awful moments, they had subjected the martyrs whom they had burned at the stake. Also of those

mediæval barons whose enjoyment of life was enhanced by the thought of the prisoners whom they kept in their dungeons. In a theological treatise which has appeared as recently as the last twenty-five years, the suggestion is offered that the souls of the impenitent will be provided with asbestos to insure their burning forever.

One must be careful, at this point, to avoid the imputation that all who believe in eternal punishment are influenced by vindictive motives, or even by the hope that some day they will be in a position to say, "I told you so." For myself, I have no doubt at all that many persons who are themselves merc ful and forgiving feel driven to this belief by what they conceive to be the teaching of the Bible and the theological position of the church. In the course of a sermon delivered just after the Battle of Belleau Wood, a distinguished clergyman felt compelled to say that every impenitent American soldier killed in battle dies in his sins and is forever lost. "I honor him," he said, "so far as it is possible for me to do so, I wish he had repented and accepted Christ, but he had his chance and failed to take it." Surely, there is no vindictiveness here—sorrow, rather, and a solemn, awful sense of ministerial duty. But would this conscientious preacher have felt under any obligation to voice so terrible a judgment if only he had considered the implications of his faith that God is like Christ?

We must, no doubt, consider the possibility of a human will becoming fixed in its opposition to truth

and goodness. But what reason have we to believe that, in the case of an impenitent soul, such a catastrophe is bound to occur in the hour of death, so that beyond death there is no chance of repentance? And if to-morrow, or a thousand years from to-morrow, some prodigal son should find it in his heart to say, "I will arise and go to my father," would a Christ-like God refuse to receive him?

Consider also another theological dogma which has profoundly influenced the thought and feeling of our Western world.

Neither the great Old Testament prophets nor Jesus considered that there was any obstacle to forgiveness in the heart of God. The belief of the prophets is reflected in that famous saying of Isaiah, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." What must the evil man do to obtain forgiveness? Only, forsake his way, and return to the Lord. God is ready and eager to forgive. He will abundantly pardon. So the great prophets. And Jesus? Far from suggesting that there is any obstacle to forgiveness in the heart of God, Jesus paints such pictures as these: a lost sheep, and a shepherd going out into the night to find it; a lost coin, and a housewife lighting a lamp and sweeping the house and seeking diligently until she finds it; a lost son, and a father who "saw him and was moved with

compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him."

But many of our theologians have considered that there is, or at least once was, an obstacle to forgiveness in the heart of God. They have pictured God as an inexorable Creditor, demanding the payment of the last pound of flesh; or as an inexorable Judge, insisting that the last demand of an abstract justice shall be met. They have insisted that Jesus died on a cross in order to satisfy the divine Creditor, in order to appease the eternal Judge. In so doing, they have been influenced by certain statements in the writings of Saint Paul, who was himself influenced by the elaborate sacrificial system of the ancient Hebrews, who were, in their turn, influenced by primitive fears of the supernatural, and primitive notions of the need of propitiating the heavenly powers.

Ought such notions to linger on in modern thinking? If the death of Jesus is represented as history's supreme instance of the price that must ever be paid for human progress—the circulation of new ideas, the enthronement of higher ideals—it will serve as an inspiration, the mightiest of all inspirations, to those forward-looking spirits of our time who are laboring, in the face of terrific odds, to build a better world If, on the other hand, the death of Jesus is represented as a sacrifice made to propitiate an offended God, will not forward-looking spirits turn away in despair from a God who needed thus to be propitiated, or—and this,

of course, is far more likely—will they not turn away in utter impatience from a church that seems unable to free itself from ancient fears and mediæval superstitions? What, moreover, shall be said concerning that growing number of persons who have come to believe that there is no hope in policies which demand an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth; that whether you are dealing with an individual who has done wrong, or with a nation which has done wrong, your aim should be, not punitive, but redemptive? What inspiration for them in the thought of a God who must have his Calvary before he can forgive?

Here, surely, we need to Christianize our thought of God, to work out the implications of our belief that God is like Christ. Was there any obstacle to forgiveness in the soul of Jesus? Did he need to be propitiated before he could or would forgive? In what word or act does one feel so overwhelmingly the moral greatness of Jesus as in that astonishing prayer on the cross, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do"? And is it not in that prayer that we get our profoundest insight into the very heart of the Eternal God?

III

If God is like Christ, there are certain other conclusions to which we may come. One is that we are not alone in our grief or our pain. Our real need at this point deserves a moment or two of careful consideration. It is not the need to know

that someone else is suffering too. If I have a toothache, why should it comfort me to discover that my neighbor is similarly afflicted? If I lose an only son, why should it cheer me to reflect that some other man has experienced an equally devastating loss? Oh, to be sure, if all I am concerned about is my own situation, the knowledge that others are in the same boat may help to reconcile me to my lot; but if, perchance, I am concerned about a world situation in which it appears that a vast number of persons are, for one reason or another, obliged to suffer, what comfort could I possibly derive from the discovery that some other sensitive spirit has been hard hit? Our real need is not to know that someone else is suffering. It is, rather, to believe that the sufferings of men are "not without meaning at the heart of the world," that the Eternal God is not unmindful of human heartache and pain.

There are times when the heavens appear to be brass, when the stars appear as

> "Innumerable, pitiless, passionless eyes,
> Cold fires, yet with power to burn and brand
> His nothingness into man."

At such times, hard-hit men and women need to be able to rest their aching hearts in the faith that what appears to be true is not true, that there is a God who knows and cares and of whom, moreover, it may be said that "in all their afflictions he was afflicted."

The notion of a God who can and does suffer in and by reason of the sufferings of men was once condemned as a heresy by the Christian Church. Under the influence of Greek philosophy, which held that the Eternal God is and must be above the reach of grief and pain, some of the early Christian fathers shrank from the thought of a suffering God. Ought we not, rather, to shrink from the thought of a God who cannot suffer? Would not such a God be below the moral level of the heroes of the race? For those who believe that God is like Christ, there can be no hesitancy here. Can you imagine Jesus of Nazareth standing aloof from human need, unmoved by men's grief, untouched by their pain? What, then, must be true of a Christ-like God?

And if God is like Christ, must we not come, also, to this conclusion: the one way out of the world's misery is the way, not of the sword, but of the cross?

Again and again, a man finds himself tempted to rely upon the sword—brute force. It seems so efficient, so conclusive. So, no doubt, it must have seemed to that curious crowd which stood one morning on a skull-shaped hill and watched a despised Idealist die. When the deed was done, they returned to their homes, talking and laughing with one another. How quickly he had died! A crossbeam, some nails, a hammer, a spear! Why, almost in no time they had gotten him out of the way, they had put an end to him! A prayer, a loud,

inarticulate cry, silence—it was all over. The sword, brute force, efficiency!

No, it was not all over. To borrow the language of Rousseau, those pierced hands have lifted empires off their hinges, they have turned the stream of history out of its channel. They still govern the ages. To-day, Jesus is more than ever alive. To-day, the power that nailed him to a cross lies dead and buried under centuries of accumulating debris. That, let it be noted, is history. The question is, What evidence does this history furnish for faith?

Let us suppose for a moment that that daring Idealist who rejected the sword and chose the cross, who refused to summon twelve legions of angels, but appealed, instead, to the more powerful angels in human hearts—let us venture for the moment to suppose that in him we have our supreme revelation of the thought and method of God, that down through the ages that is the way in which God has been moving toward the accomplishment of his grand design. Would it not follow that that is the only way in which any really grand design can be accomplished? Not the way of the sword, but the way of the cross. Not the way of brute force, but the way of patient, intelligent, long-suffering love.

IV

GOD AND EVIL

One cannot but marvel at the capacity for faith in the human heart. How very wonderful that a man should be able to say, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust him"! How astonishing that a man should be able to record, "These all died in faith, not having received the promises"! During his long, dramatic pilgrimage man has met all sorts of catastrophes, and his faith has survived them. Neither tribulation, nor anguish, nor persecution, nor famine, nor nakedness, nor peril, nor sword has destroyed his conviction that there is, at the heart of things, an eternal goodness.

This persistent, passionate belief in what Robert Louis Stevenson called the "ultimate decency of things" is itself a fact of tremendous significance. Why does life inspire and sustain such a belief? Why, indeed, unless there is in the nature of life some deep and abiding justification for such a belief? It is, no doubt, conceivable that although life appears to encourage this immemorial hope that in the end all will be well, it does so only to frustrate it, only in the end to disappoint it and make mock of it. But life in that case would be a lie, a cheat, a gigantic swindle; and that is a conclusion which can hardly be reached by any man who has

heard the song of a skylark, or witnessed the glory of a sunset, or listened to the prattle of a little child, or contemplated any simple act of human kindness.

But although, historically speaking, human faith has survived every sort of social or natural calamity, there are times when injustice and cruelty and pain and sorrow weigh heavily upon the human spirit, and the apparent indifference of the universe itself to human weal and woe raises the awful question whether man is not, after all, horribly alone in a world that is "deaf and dumb to his prayer." In a letter written to a friend whose son was in the grip of a terrible and baffling disease, Franklin K. Lane puts a question which many another man has grimly faced, "Can it be that there is no soul excepting the one we make for ourselves by fighting?" Is there, perchance, no God save that divine creation which the indomitable spirit of man is producing?

In recent years, a Norwegian author[1] has given us the strange, gripping tale of a man whom life has bruised and beaten again and again. But early one morning, in a year of famine, this man rises from his bed, goes to his bin which contains but a half bushel of barley, takes the barley, and crossing over into his enemy's field, sows it with the last of his own grain. Why? "Standing," said he, "upon the ruins of my life, I felt a vast responsibility. Mankind must arise and be better than the blind powers that order its ways; in the midst

[1] Johan Bojer, *The Great Hunger*, New York. Moffat, Yard & Co., publishers.

of its sorrows it must take heed that the godlike does not die." At daybreak he came trudging back across the wet field, and there at the fence was his wife, who smiled at him, as if she too "had risen from the ocean of her suffering, that in the daybreak she might take her share in the creating of God."

Here, then, is a question with which many modern minds are wrestling: Can it be that justice and mercy and love and pity and self-forgetfulness are, after all, but human phenomena which have nothing corresponding to them in the universe outside? Is divinity to be found only in humanity? This question would never have presented itself to troubled minds were it not for the fact that there is so much in life that is hard to reconcile with the thought of an infinitely wise and powerful and righteous God. So, let us venture to face again the age-old problem of evil, not in the vain expectation that we shall be able completely to solve it, but just in the hope that out of serious reflection at least some illumination may come.

I

There are several fancied solutions of the problem which we may briefly glance at and then lay aside as hopelessly inadequate. Here, for instance, is the notion of a personal devil on whom one may load entire responsibility for all the evil that afflicts and saddens the lives of men. But any satisfaction which you may find in believing in a personal devil

can be shattered in an instant by the question of a fascinated child who looks at you through wondering eyes and asks, "But who made him?" Unless you are prepared to believe that there are two ultimate, eternal spirits, one good, the other evil, you can find no intellectual relief in the notion of a personal devil. Nor will it help matters to substitute for the word "devil" the two words "mortal mind." Granted, for the moment, that what is called evil is merely a delusion of "mortal mind," the question remains, Who is responsible for that "mortal mind" which is capable of entertaining so distressing a delusion? Nor may refuge be found in Mr. Wells' notion of a finite God who is doing the best he can in a universe for which he is not responsible; for this notion, although it protects the reputation of God, leaves one wondering whether this well-meaning but finite God will prove adequate to the gigantic work which he has undertaken. And driving one to the conclusion that God and men are alike the creations of some ultimate person or force, it leaves one asking, Why does this ultimate person or force countenance the presence of so much evil in the world? Nor, further, is there any complete solution of the problem in the suggestion that only to man's partial vision does anything appear evil; that if only we could see the whole of life as God sees it everything would appear good. In this suggestion, there is, no doubt, an element of important truth. Much that we now regard as evil, or at least as painful and disappoint-

ing enough, we ourselves, in after years, may come to recognize as good. Many a man has learned at last to say, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted." But surely no sane person will be willing to say that it is only to our shortsighted human eyes that injustice and selfishness and cruelty appear evil, not to the far-seeing eyes of God.

II

What answer, then, may be given to this persistent question: Why is there so much evil in the world, if there is, at the heart of it, an eternal goodness?

Let us note first the obvious fact that a vast deal which man suffers he himself occasions. Who, on some glorious starlit night, as he has stood and gazed at the majesty of the heavens, or on some glorious sun-bathed morning, as he has stood and gazed at the beauty of the earth, has not reflected: "How very wonderful this world would be if only its human inhabitants should one day behave themselves!" A certain amount of physical pain would doubtless remain, although there would be very much less of it than there is now. It would remain as a needed warning of danger ahead and as a powerful incentive to avoid it; and also, perhaps, as an illuminating, spiritualizing agent productive of truer insights, finer emotions, and quicker sympathies. But all the incalculable suffering that is caused by "man's inhumanity to man" would disappear—all the needless misery that is occasioned by vice and envy and vindictiveness and injustice and selfishness.

That man is able thus to afflict his fellows and his own soul is due to the fact that he possesses a certain measure of freedom. The old debate over the question of free will is still going on. But it is a significant fact that we all act as though our fellows, at least, were morally responsible. We praise or we blame, and there is, of course, no justification for either praise or blame, if men possess no real freedom. We likewise exhort one another. From the standpoint of intellectual consistency, could anything be funnier than the spectacle of some hard-boiled predestinarian pleading with his fellows to come and be saved? It is, I should say, extremely doubtful that any argument for sheer determinism will ever be able to prevail against man's instinctive feeling of freedom, and his constant working assumption that his neighbor is morally responsible.

It is, no doubt, a legitimate question whether God is justified in granting men freedom in view of all the accumulated tragedy that has come from it. One of our living American philosophers[1] has quite boldly taken the position that freedom is a dubious gift, hardly worth the pain that must be charged to its account. He inclines to believe that we ought to prefer being made in such manner that we could not help thinking what is true and doing what is right, "if we might thereby save all the suffering and degradation and sin in the world, satisfy all those longings which, as it is, are so largely destined

[1] Durant Drake, *Problems of Religion*, p. 377. Houghton Mifflin Co., publishers.

not to be fulfilled, develop those capacities which have never been unfolded, attain to some measure of that wonderful happiness which we glimpse now only in a few rare and fleeting moments."

But given the condition which this vision presupposes—a state of intellectual and moral coercion —what sort of longings would human beings have to be satisfied, what sort of capacities would they possess to be unfolded? And as for the wonderful happiness which would then appear, would it be any more wonderful than the present happiness of a pure-bred Jersey cow contentedly chewing her cud by the quiet waters of a meandering stream? In such a world we would be spared all the "suffering and degradation and sin" which a misused freedom occasions. We would also be spared all the heroism of history, all the moral glories of men who, faced with real alternatives, have chosen the true, the beautiful, and the good. Take away from human beings all power of choice, force them to think what is true and do what is right, and you will have a world in which there are no sinners; you will also have a world in which there are no saints. Speaking for myself, I would rather live in a world in which there are a lot of sinners and a few saints than in a world all of whose inhabitants, however intellectually and morally correct, were, after all, nothing more than plaster puppets manipulated by celestial strings.

Could anything be as wonderful as a race of free human spirits finally, of their own volition, accept-

ing truth, creating beauty, doing good? May we not, then, venture to believe that in order to achieve so wonderful a result God assumed the awful responsibility of granting men freedom? May we not also venture to hope that he did so knowing that faith and hope and love would triumph in the end?

III

But now, from man and his blunders, let us turn to nature and her "cruelties," her apparent indifference to human weal and woe. We do not demand that nature, apart from man, shall give us a completely satisfying revelation of God, but it does occur to us that nature ought not to be indifferent to human weal and woe, and certainly that nature ought not to mock at those supreme values for which man at his best supremely cares.

Well, concerning the so-called cruelty of nature, it may, I think, be said that our generation is not as convinced as were Huxley and Mill that nature is unspeakably cruel. We are beginning to suspect that animals do not suffer as much as we suffer from physical pain. We are also beginning to suspect that what we have seen in nature, as in a mirror, is in large part our own passion and strife; that we have pronounced nature "red in tooth and claw" because so much of our own industrial and international life is red through greed and hate. This suspicion is being steadily confirmed and strengthened by the evidence which is now coming in that the most significant fact in nature is not

a ruthless "struggle for existence," but mutual aid; that nature, in fact, far from mocking our human ideals of love and service and co-operation, is shaming our human folly of selfishness and strife.

We are, however, still troubled by the apparent indifference of nature to human weal and woe. Nature appears to take no account of those moral distinctions which men themselves so zealously guard. This statement is not wholly true, for nature does not behave toward the man who has taken his fifth whisky and soda, or his ninth cup of coffee, in exactly the same way in which she behaves toward the man who eats, drinks, or works temperately. But nature does make her sun to rise on the good and evil alike. She does send her rain on the just and the unjust alike. She does hurl her thunderbolts at the sinner and the saint alike. Under certain conditions she will freeze a hero quite as remorselessly as she will freeze a coward. She will prostrate the wise man with no more compunction that she will prostrate the fool. She will slay a great scientist or a promising statesman as relentlessly as she will slay a nincompoop. And sometimes when, from our human standpoint, she would appear to have a perfectly good opportunity to open a path for progress by arranging a first-class funeral, she strikes down instead the very man on whom we have centered our hopes. So we are prone to conclude that nature grinds remorselessly on without any reference to those moral distinctions which seem so vital to us, and certainly without any

reference to those personal joys and hopes and aspirations which matter so much to us.

But when we quarrel with the so-called indifference of nature, what we are really quarreling with is the reign of law. This wonderful universe in which we find ourselves alive is, throughout all its illimitable spaces, law-abiding. We may be profoundly thankful that it is. We are thankful when we stop to think about it. We at least dimly realize that it would be truly terrible to live in a world that was not law-abiding—a world in which nothing could be absolutely depended upon. In such a world there could be no science, no engineering, no forethought, no planning, no undertaking requiring years to carry through. In such a world men would have no heart either to sow or to reap. A law-abiding world is a sane and dependable world. It is an all-essential condition of every kind of intellectual and scientific and social achievement.

In a law-abiding world, an episode such as this may happen—did happen but a short time ago. Far out on the Atlantic an Italian freighter was caught in a full gale. Her steering gear was smashed, one of her booms broken off, her storeroom flooded, her lifeboats lost; and, listing almost thirty degrees, every wave was breaking over her. She wirelessed a call for help, and one hundred and sixty miles away her S O S was heard by an American vessel, the President Harding. At once the young radio-operator who picked up her cry of distress got into communication with his captain, and then, under

his chief's direction, he wirelessed back, at various intervals, such cheering messages as these: "Proceeding to your assistance;" "Making all possible speed;" "Hold on until daylight;" "Doing all possible to reach you;" "You are now in sight—dead ahead;" "At daybreak we will be ready to save you." And save her they did, because they were operating in a law-abiding world.

But rejoicing as we do in the presence of law, we want all sorts of exceptions to be made in our behalf, or at least in behalf of persons for whom we greatly care. We approve of the law of gravitation, but would like to have it suspended for a moment if one of our children should begin to fall over a cliff. We approve likewise of the law of motion, but would like to have it set aside for an instant if some one dear to us should happen to step in front of an onrushing car. It doesn't seem to occur to us that an answer to our prayer might bring the planets down upon our head.

If nature should make all the exceptions which each one of us, in his self-concern, or his concern for half a dozen other persons, would like to have her make, instead of a cosmos we would have a chaos. If nature, moment by moment, should adjust herself to the moral desert of man; if she should make her sun to rise upon the good, but not upon the evil, and send her rain upon the just, but not upon the unjust; if she should freeze, never a sober man, but only an occasional drunkard, and prostrate never a wise man, but only an occasional fool,

our churches would be crowded to the doors with people determined to be as good as good can be; and then, of course, goodness would cease to be good. It would become indistinguishable from self-interest, and a man's one chance of moral distinction, of moral heroism, would be to go out and do something bad!

Nature is not hostile to those supreme values for which man at his best supremely cares. More and more it is being revealed to us that man's idealism has its roots deep down in a prehuman world. Nor is nature indifferent to human weal and woe. By her one great gift of law she has provided the first essential condition of all human progress; by her refusal to adjust herself to man's moral desert she has made possible the glory of his moral achievement.

IV

Any discussion of "the problem of evil" ought boldly to face the inevitable limitations under which even God is obliged to work.

Once upon a time a small boy put to his Sunday-school teacher this question: "Could God make a stone so big that he couldn't lift it?" There is evidently an inherent limitation in all power, even the power of Him whom we call almighty. A God who could not make a stone so big that he would be unable to lift it would be a limited God. A God who could make a stone so big that he would be unable to lift it would, likewise, be a limited God.

There is no escape from this fact of inherent limitation. Following the lead of this small boy, we too may put a few questions:

1. Could God make a world so law-abiding that even he could not interfere with its orderly processes?

2. Could God make men so free that even he could not compel them to think what is true or to do what is right?

3. Could God unite men so closely in domestic and social relationships that not even he could save them from the consequences of such relationships?

As a matter of fact, the world in which we are living is a law-abiding world, containing men and women who are, at least in a measure, free, and who are bound together for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health till death do them part. And for this fact of a law-abiding world containing free personalities closely related, God himself must be held responsible. But if you and I were given an opportunity to vote on the question, what would we say?

What would we say in answer to the question, Do you want to live in a lawless world or in a world that is law-abiding? How many of us would vote for a lawless world in which the same trees might produce good fruit one year and poisonous fruit the next? In which a fungus growth might prove to be, one day, an edible mushroom; the following day, a deadly toadstool? In a world that is supposed to be lawless, governed by the caprice of

malicious spirits, primitive man goes about in constant fear, endeavoring in every way that suggests itself to his dark and troubled mind to propitiate the invisible determiners of his destiny. Who would not prefer to live in a law-abiding world—a world so fundamentally trustworthy that whatsoever a man soweth that, and not something else, will he reap?

What, next, would we say in answer to the question, Do you want to be free—free to make your own choices whether for good or for evil? Huxley once said: "If some great Power should agree to make me think what is true and do what is right on condition of my being turned into a sort of clock and wound up every morning before I got out of bed, I would instantly close with the offer." Well, it is at least conceivable that God could have created us in such fashion as automatically to make us think what is true and do what is right. But had he so made us, we would have been puppets, not persons; manikins, not men; mechanical performers in a continuous Punch-and-Judy show. No opportunity for intelligent judgment or moral choice or spiritual achievement would have been given us. We would, presumably, have been far more efficient than we now are. But would not the loss of moral freedom have been too big a price to pay for mere efficiency? Who would not choose to be free, and run all the risks of freedom, rather than surrender the possibility of manhood? Let freedom be granted and Judas is possible; but so also is

Jesus. We deplore Judas whenever we meet him. But who would want to live in a world in which, all the conditions of character being absent, Jesus would be not only improbable but impossible?

What, finally, would we say in answer to the question, Do you want to live in a solitary world or in a world of social relationships? Many of us know from actual experience that social relationships involve both joy and sorrow, both glad surprise and painful disappointment. Out of social relationships comes the intensest happiness which human spirits ever know; comes, also the most terrible heartache. But who would choose to live alone? What more fearful to contemplate than a life wholly devoid of heart warming fellowship? Many will say that our highest happiness comes only through a deliberate entrance into the lives of others—into all that concerns others, whether of weal or of woe. It is not good to close your ears to the cries of the world, to shut your eyes to the misery of the world, to separate yourself so completely from the life of the world that your own heart is never wrung by its sorrow nor stung by its sin. It is good to "live in some house by the side of the road and be a friend to man." Who would not vote for a world in which human beings are united for better or worse?

But once we have voted for a law-abiding world, and for moral freedom, and for social relationships, we ought boldly to face the fact that in a world where law is present, and men are free, and

closely united, there are some things which even God cannot be expected to do.

In a law-abiding world, if, for instance, some Titanic speeding through a fog, crashes into an iceberg, God cannot be expected to keep her from going to the bottom. Or if some German gunner sends a well-aimed shell toward an American trench, God cannot be expected to prevent an explosion which may destroy a half-dozen men. Or if Germany in 1871, or France in 1921, sows seeds of hatred and revenge, God cannot be expected to prevent that inevitable fruitage whose name is War. There are, likewise, some things which not even God can be expected to do in a world where men are free. When one says that men are free, it does not follow that they are free to wreck the universe; they are free only within certain limits. It may, I think, be seriously doubted whether men are strong enough to defeat forever the purposes of God. But it is only too evident that they are sufficiently free and strong to interfere with God's purpose at least for a time. Let us assume that Armenian massacres are as distasteful to the Almighty as they are to us. But, given human freedom, how can God prevent them so long as the nature of the Turk remains unchanged and European diplomacy fights shy of the issue? There are some things which not even God can do at certain times, in certain places, where men are free to make their own choices. And must not a similar acknowledgment be made in respect of the power of God in a

world where men are closely related? In such a world, if I am wise and just and unselfish, you benefit. If I am foolish or unjust or greedy, you suffer. How could it be otherwise? If I am able to bless you by my wisdom or by my goodness, it inevitably follows that I am able to curse you by my folly or by my sin. Once we have voted for law and freedom and society, we must be prepared to accept the conditions which they involve.

V

On the dark fact of evil the theory of evolution has shed a wonderful, revealing light. Man, on this theory, is not descended from a monkey. He is not the offspring of any old-world monkey, or any gibbon, or chimpanzee, or orang-utan, or gorilla. But the evolutionary hypothesis does maintain that man and the anthropoid apes are descended from a common stock, and that this common parent was itself the product of a long and costly evolutionary process. Man, that is to say, is not apart from but a part of nature. In the very most literal sense, he may say with Tennyson's Ulysses, "I am a part of all that I have met." He may refer, as did Saint Francis of Assisi, to "my little brothers, the birds," without necessarily incurring the suspicion that his brain is becoming soft.

What a heartening light this fact throws upon many phenomena which otherwise remain dark and cruel and terrifying! When you have come to the conclusion that man is a veritable part of

the whole world process, have you dishonored him? No! You may still say: "What a piece of work is man! How noble in reason! How infinite in faculty! in form and moving, how expressive and admirable! in action, how like an angel! in apprehension, how like a god!" You have not dishonored man, but *you have honored nature.* Is it not fair to "argue from man to the character of the process which produced him"? If Abraham Lincoln is good, must we not say of the process which produced him that, in its intention, at least, it was a good process?

Our problem is to reconcile the conception of God which we form when we look into the eyes of a good man or woman with the conception of God which we dread to form when we consider such phenomena as drought and cyclones and earthquakes. On the old theory that man was a special creation, apart from, not a part of nature, no reconciliation was possible. We were left with a dreadful kind of dualism which saw one sort of God revealed in a Socrates and another sort of God revealed in a cyclone. But what if man is an integral part of the whole world process? How immeasurably greater becomes our respect for that process!

Most of us applauded John Hay when he wrote of Jim Bludsoe, the heroic engineer of the burning steamer Prairie Bell:

> "He weren't no saint, but at jedgment
> I'd run my chance with Jim,
> 'Long side of some pious gentlemen
> That wouldn't shook hands with him.

He seen his duty—dead-sure thing—
And went for it thar and then;
And Christ ain't a-going to be too hard
On a man that died for men."

No, and by the same token, you and I ought not to be too hard on a universe which has produced an Abraham Lincoln, a Saul of Tarsus, and a Jesus of Nazareth. A tornado that rips the roofs off a hundred houses and crushes little children beneath falling timbers—it looks bad! A prolonged drought that causes thousands of people to perish miserably from starvation—it looks bad! An earthquake which, in a few awful moments, converts a city into a junk-pile—it looks bad! But would it be fair to judge a man like Jim Bludsoe by his occasional lapses from strict sobriety, and not by that splendid deed of self-forgetfulness in which he so evidently expressed the real intention of his life? And would it be fair to judge the universe by an occasional cyclone, or drought, or earthquake, and not by its supreme spiritual achievement? When an Abraham Lincon, in the midst of a bitter civil war, writes, "With malice toward none, with charity for all;" when a Saint Paul exclaims, "I would that I were anathema for my brethren's sake;" when Jesus, in his agony, prays, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do," is it not only fair to judge the universe by that?

VI

And now, let us acknowledge that life on the whole is good. There is so much good in the world

that we feel called upon to account for the evil in it; there is not so much evil in the world that we feel challenged to account for the good in it. Darwin expressed the deliberate and well-informed judgment that in the world of nature "happiness decidedly prevails;" that "all sentient beings have been formed so as to enjoy, as a general rule, happiness." And would you not say that in the world of men, likewise, happiness decidedly prevails? Human life contains a bad deal of pain and sorrow, but, on the whole, is it not good? Even Schopenhauer appeared to think so; for although he railed against life, he nevertheless clung to it. Theoretically, he justified, even glorified suicide; but he never practiced it.

In one of Gilbert Chesterton's gentle satires[1] on the blindness of conventional minds, the hero, whose name let it be noted is Smith, sends a strange telegram to his best friend. It reads: "Man found alive with two legs." The best friend not unpardonably concludes that Smith has gone daft. But consider the history behind the telegram. In Brokespeare College, Cambridge, of which the hero was an undergraduate, there was a warden, one Dr. Emerson Eames, who enjoyed the reputation of being the greatest living authority on the pessimist thinkers. He himself maintained that all *thinkers* are pessimist thinkers. One night, very late, the hero sat in this professor's study while the learned man explained:

[1] *Man Alive*, published by John Lane Co. (Now Peter Riley Co.)

" '. . . A puppy with hydrophobia would probably struggle for life while we killed it; but if we were kind, we should kill it. So an omniscient God would put us out of our pain. He would strike us dead.'

" 'Why doesn't he strike us dead?' asked the undergraduate, abstractedly, plunging his hands into his pockets.

" 'He is dead himself,' said the philosopher; 'that is where he is truly enviable.' "

A moment later, the greatest living authority on the pessimist philosophers found himself looking into the barrel of a revolver held in the hand of the mild-mannered student.

" 'I'll help you out of your hole, old man,' said Smith, with rough tenderness. 'I'll put the puppy out of its pain.' "

Emerson Eames retreated toward the window. " 'Do you mean to kill me?' he cried.

" 'It's not a thing I'd do for every one,' said Smith with emotion. 'But you and I seem to have got so intimate to-night, somehow. I know all your troubles now, and the only cure, old chap.'

" 'Put that thing down,' shouted the warden.

" 'It'll soon be over, you know,' said Smith, with the air of a sympathetic dentist."

Just beneath the window to which the learned man had retreated was an ancient "flying buttress, still shapelessly shaped into gray beasts and devils, but blinded with mosses and washed with rains. With an ungainly and most courageous leap, Eames

sprang out on this antique bridge, as the only possible mode of escape from the maniac. He sat astride it, still in his academic gown, dangling his long thin legs, and considering further chances of flight. . . ."

" 'Help!' cried the warden of Brokespeare College; 'help!'

" 'The puppy struggles,' said the undergraduate, with an eye of pity; 'the poor little puppy struggles. How fortunate it is that I am wiser and kinder than he,' and he sighted his weapon so as exactly to cover the upper part of Eames' bald head."

The sun rose, "gathering glory that seemed too full for the deep skies to hold, and the shallow waters beneath them seemed golden and brimming and deep enough for the thirst of the gods." To the professor, sitting astride his gargoyle, the world suddenly appeared very inviting. He acknowledged that he wanted to live, that he would give anything to get back to life.

" 'Give anything,' cried Smith; 'then, blast your impudence, give us a song!'

" 'What do you mean?' demanded the exasperated Eames; 'what song?'

" 'A hymn, I think, would be most appropriate,' answered the other gravely. 'I'll let you off if you repeat after me the words—

> " 'I thank the goodness and the grace
> That on my birth have smiled,
> And perched me on this curious place,
> A happy English child.' "

The professor complied. He also, at Smith's command, lifted up his hands and thanked heaven for "churches and chapels and villas and vulgar people and puddles and pots and pans and sticks and rags and bones and spotted blinds." And when, at last, a subwarden, seeing his plight, summoned a porter and a ladder, and had him taken down, the greatest living authority on the pessimist thinkers was man enough to acknowledge that he had talked like a fool, that his philosophy did not, could not, stand a real test. So great, indeed, was his gratitude, that he promised Smith an alpha-plus in the course which he was pursuing!

God forbid that we should complacently close our eyes to the darker aspects of the human lot; but in simple justice to the Great Reality in whom we live and move and have our being, ought we not to acknowledge that life, on the whole, is good?

VII

There is, moreover, in our human world, such a thing as goodness—love, forgiveness, tenderness, courage, integrity, self-forgetfulness. Here we are, the ordinary men and women of average communities. We have not yet attained. We are far from being perfect. But we all have our better moments in which we hunger and thirst after righteousness. Many of us have known moments in which we would have given almost anything to become pure in heart and genuinely unselfish. Here we are, full of imperfection, but dissatisfied with our im-

perfection, trying to rise on the stepping-stones of our dead selves to higher things. Whence comes this sometimes wistful, sometimes even passionate, desire for goodness? There is evil enough in our human world, "goodness knows." But is it not cheering to note that *there is a goodness which knows?* And does not the question rise, Where does this goodness come from? If we are obliged to account for moral evil, are we not also obliged to account for moral good? Harnack insists that "as long as men continue to sacrifice their possessions, their blood and their life, for ideal ends, it will be impossible for any one to maintain the materialistic view of history." So long as there exists in human hearts a love that seeketh not its own, but suffereth long and is kind, will it be possible to maintain the atheistic view of life?

One night, in France, when the big guns were roaring and belching death, and poor fellows were being picked up horribly wounded and placed in ambulances, tier upon tier, I looked up into the sky, seeking a momentary relief from the continuous sight of mud and blood; and I shall never forget how utterly indifferent seemed those distant, silent stars! So, also, in the presence of drought and crop failure, famine and pestilence and tornado and earthquake, when I have considered how men, women, and children are blotted out with, apparently, as little compunction as a thoughtless boy will blot out an ant heap, I have sometimes wondered whether we human creatures were not in

the grasp of vast impersonal forces, wholly devoid of human concern. But then, just when I was beginning to feel what John Burroughs called a "cosmic chill," I have thought of certain persons known to me, full of the milk of human kindness, concerned about everybody's welfare except their own; I have thought of men like Abraham Lincoln, and of women like Alice Freeman Palmer; I have thought of Him, who, "despised and rejected of men," nailed to a cross and racked with pain, prayed, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do"—and the "cosmic chill" has passed. I have refused to close my eyes to the tragedy in human life, but I have found it possible to believe that the goodness which dwells in human hearts is a revelation of a goodness which dwells eternally at the heart of the world.

VIII

Have I answered every question which the fact of evil raises? Most certainly I have not. But my hope is that the suggestions which have been offered may bring to some other troubled mind at least a little of the relief which they have administered to my own. And there are, for me, two heartening reflections. It is evident that much of the world's tragedy it lies within the power of man to remove. By learning to know, and choosing to obey, the laws of life, by determining to use his freedom with intelligence and conscientiousness, by bringing into every human relationship an uncon-

querable spirit of good will, man may rid the world of a vast deal of the pain and sorrow which now afflict it. And, speaking for myself, this also is evident; through all the long and costly evolutionary process, I see the footprints of a loving God moving slowly, but surely, on and up to a goal which will, in the end, justify the process.

V

THE WILL OF GOD

In the preachments of many pulpits and the sighs of many pews there has been the suggestion that the will of God is like cod liver oil; no doubt it is good for you, but oh! it isn't good.

In one of his essays, President King deplores the fact that, in nearly all hymnbooks, hymns which speak of the will of God are classified under such headings as Resignation, Submission, Trial, Discipline. He might have gone further and deplored the character of many of these hymns. One of them contains this stanza:

> "Though dark my path and sad my lot,
> Let me be still and murmur not,
> Or breathe the prayer divinely taught,
> Thy will be done."

That, of course, is pure fatalism. On the lips of an Egyptian fellah it would be consistent. On the lips of a Christian it is absurd. The man who identifies the will of God with things-as-they-are is either a tyrant or a slave; and if a slave, his slavery is not merely of the body but of the soul.

Consider also a statement which appears in the service used in many churches for the burial of the dead: "Inasmuch as it has pleased Almighty God in his wise providence to take out of the world the

soul of the departed. . . ." What pious presumption that is likely to be! A wonderful mother sickens, grows worse, dies, leaving a distracted husband and three little children. Was it the will of God that she should be taken? What right or reason has anyone to suppose that it was? How very much more reasonable to suppose that it was the will of God that she should live! To say to some man who must face the future without the mother of his children, "It is now the will of God that you should be strong and very courageous," is to talk sense; but to say to such a man, "It was the will of God that she should be taken; you must learn to say, Thy will be done," is to talk nonsense; and of all the obstacles encountered by religion, pious nonsense is by no means the least. There are, to be sure, certain laws which govern the human body. When these laws are obeyed the body prospers. When they are disobeyed, whether consciously or unconsciously, the body suffers; it may even perish. And God, undeniably, is responsible for these laws. But is it fair to hold him responsible for what inevitably happens when they are disregarded?

Whence comes this notion that the will of God is apt to be something distasteful? It is a relic, no doubt, of the fear felt by primitive man in the presence of powerful and mysterious forces—a fear which civilization only slowly and never completely drives away. And is it not a relic, also, of that mediæval theology which thought of the Lord of the universe in terms of the lords of the land? The

serf cringed before his lord. The theologian very nearly cringed before his God. Mediæval theology insisted that God had arranged in advance the tragedy of Golgotha—planned it down to the last gruesome detail. It was the will of God that Jesus should be nailed to the cross amid the jeers of a curious, calloused crowd, while burly soldiers threw dice for his tunic. In this revolting spectacle God obtained some sort of "satisfaction"! One can hardly state this view without seeming to caricature it; nor would one attempt to state it in this present connection were it not for the fact that it has exerted such a baneful influence upon the feeling of many generations with respect to the will of God. The will of a God who was capable of contriving Calvary could hardly be regarded with enthusiasm.

How different becomes your feeling about the will of God when you venture to believe that Calvary was a frustration, not a formulation, of Eternal Love. When Jesus knelt in the olive grove, and sweat, as it were, great drops of blood, and prayed, "If it be possible, let this cup pass away from me; nevertheless, not my will but thine be done," what was the will of God for him? That he should die the death reserved for criminal slaves—be electrocuted, if one may use a word which suggests the infamy rather than the instrument of the kind of death he was made to die? By no means! What then? Was it not that he should die rather than surrender his ideals? And was that something distasteful? No physically healthy and morally

wholesome man enjoys the thought of dying. Certainly, he would not enjoy the thought of crucifixion. Jesus himself avoided the cross as long as he honorably could. But when a situation arises which presents the dread alternative, death with honor or life with dishonor, which becomes the more distasteful to any right-minded man? When Joan of Arc first saw the scaffold on which she was condemned to die, her courage gave way. She was only seventeen years of age and her young flesh shrank from the flame. She offered to recant her "heresy," and signed a formal statement that she had done so. But three days later she recanted her recantation. "It is I," she said, "who have failed, not my Voices. They never have deceived me. I signed that form because I was afraid of death, and my Voices have come to me in prison and have reproached me for my great treason. They have told me that I ought not to have been afraid, that I have indeed perjured myself when I said God did not send me, for in truth he did send me." Then she ascended the scaffold and became a Saint! She would not, of course, have chosen the dread alternative, but when it presented itself she found it more distasteful to live than to die.

The will of God will never be greeted with cheers so long as Calvary is seen in the light, or darkness rather, of mediæval notions of what was due to an offended Deity. It might be greeted with cheers if Calvary were thought of as a supreme instance of the price paid by Eternal Love for human progress.

I

What if men should begin to associate the will of God, not with what an illiterate preacher once called the "unscrupulous decrees of an all-wise Providence," but with the ascertainable laws of life? The hymn to which reference has already been made contains another stanza which says:

"If thou shouldst call me to resign
What most I prize—it ne'er was mine;
I only yield thee what was thine,
Thy will be done."

But this notion that God is like a spoiled child who wants something that I want—wants it because I want it—and won't be satisfied until he gets it, is surely the last word in sanctimonious tommyrot. God will not ask me to give up anything that is in harmony with the laws of life. If he should call me to resign what most I prize, it is because I am prizing something which does not make for fullness of life. Far from feeling "resigned" about the will of God, I ought to feel jubilant about it. I ought to say with John Hay:

"Not in dumb resignation,
We lift our hands on high;
Not like the nerveless fatalist,
Content to do and die,
Our faith springs like the eagle's
Who soars to meet the sun,
And cries exulting unto thee,
'O Lord, thy will be done.' "

The attempt to discover the will of God ought to become for me the most thrilling of all adventures save one—the attempt to do it.

II

But how may we discover the will of God? Huxley has, I think, suggested the way. We must "sit down before facts as a little child." We must keep our eyes open and our minds open. And we must be prepared to "follow humbly" wherever the facts lead. Whenever men have done this, and just in the measure in which they have been willing and able to do it, they have made significant discoveries concerning the will of God. Copernicus discovered that the earth rotates and revolves about the sun. Galileo discovered the law of falling bodies, and Newton the law of motion, and Charles the law of the expansion of gases, and Bessemer the process of making steel. Rutherford discovered nitrogen; and Priestly, oxygen; and Leeuwenhoek, bacteria; and Pasteur, the bacterial origin of disease; and Hertwig the nature of fertilization; and Walter Reed, the cause of yellow fever. Hertz discovered electromagnetic waves; and Röntgen, X-rays; and the Curies, radium. Klebs isolated the diphtheria bacillus, and Koch the cholera and the tubercle bacillus. Franklin invented the focal lens, and Eli Whitney the cotton gin; and Watt the steam engine, and Daguerre photography, and Edison the phonograph and the incandescent light, and the Wright brothers the aeroplane, and Marconi wireless communication.

And blind indeed the man who does not see that in all of these discoveries and inventions the will of God was being revealed and accomplished.

By an equally patient and open-eyed scrutiny of facts, the economist might make important discoveries as to the will of God for business and industry and commerce; and the historian might make equally important discoveries as to the will of God for nations and races!

There are various ways of writing and of teaching history. One is to say, for example: "Eleazar begat Phineas, and Phineas begat Abishua, and Abishua begat Bukki, and Bukki begat Uzzi, and Uzzi begat Zerohiah, and Zerohiah begat Meraioth," etc. Or, to cite a modern instance, "When in the year 1700, the king of Spain, Charles II, died, Louis XIV cut short the argument by sending his grandson, Philip, to Madrid to assume the rule of the undivided Spanish dominions. Out of this wanton act grew the war of the Spanish succession, for which William had hardly prepared, by the renewal of his continental alliance, when he died (1702). His wife, Mary, having died some years before (1694), without issue, the crown passed by virtue of the act of settlement (1701) to Mary's sister, Anne." When history is written in this fashion only pedants read it. When it is taught in this fashion, the students look out of the window or go peacefully to sleep.

Or history may be written and taught as though it were nothing more than a series of sensational anecdotes such as appear in highly colored Sunday

supplements. Attention is then directed to Mark Antony's amorous affair with Cleopatra; and to Martin Luther's use of an ink bottle in connection with the devil; and to the stabbing to death, in his bathtub, of the wild-brained Marat. Under this sort of treatment history becomes interesting; as interesting as "Snappy Stories"—and of as little importance. Or history may be written as propaganda; to vindicate the Roman Catholic Church; or to justify the existence of some Protestant sect; or to prove that England has nearly always been in the right; or to show that if there is one nation in the world that is in a position to stand and pray thus with itself, "God, I thank thee that I am not as other nations are, thieves, pirates, treaty-breakers," that nation is "these United States." When history is written in this fashion, it becomes almost, if not quite, the most pernicious thing that has ever been devised.

But there is a far more excellent way of writing and of teaching history. History may be studied, not merely as a record of the births and deaths of kings and princes, nor as a means of justifying and confirming religious and political prejudices, but as a profoundly significant revelation of the will of God. In this case, of course, the historian must keep steadily before him, not the demands of the publishers of textbooks, nor the prejudices of "one hundred-per-cent" patrioteers, but only the data of truth. He must sit down before facts as a little child, and follow humbly wherever they lead.

III

Henry Drummond used to say that there are, in the will of God, a universal part and a particular part: a universal part for everyone and a particular part for each individual.

Those of us who believe in Jesus can hardly be in doubt as to the universal part of the will of God. "Whosoever would be first among you let him be your servant, even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto but to minister." Jesus insisted that every man ought to be a servant—not a butler necessarily, but some kind of servant. That every man ought to be a minister—not a clergyman, necessarily, but some kind of minister.

One of the most terribly mistaken notions that has ever crept into human thinking is the notion that a few occupations are sacred and all others secular. This notion has been the very efficient cause of two very deplorable effects. It has caused a considerable number of clergymen to think of themselves more highly than they ought to think; to assume that they were the salt of the earth, even after the salt had lost its savor. And it has caused a considerable number of laymen to suppose that religion is religion, that business is business, and that any wedding of these two is unthinkable. It has caused pious persons to feel more joy over one young man who decides to go into the ministry than over ninety and nine other young men who decide to go into business. And it has caused these ninety and nine other young men to suppose

that, inasmuch as they did not elect to go into the ministry, they are under no obligation to serve the community.

I am, of course, speaking historically, and I shall, in a moment, give glad recognition to the increasing number of exceptions to this historic rule. But just now let me venture to suggest that this historic division of human activity into a few sacred occupations and many secular occupations has proved detrimental to both. It has infected the pulpit with abnormality, and even religion itself with seeming unreality; and it has infected business and industry with the spirit of paganism.

Let me also venture to suggest that this historic division cannot forever be maintained. Of two possible outcomes, one, I think, is bound soon or late to occur. Either human life will become increasingly sanctified or it will become increasingly secularized. The standards of the church will become the standards of business and of industry, or the standards of business and of industry will become the standards of the church. The business man will become a minister, or the minister will become a mere ecclesiastic. What I mean is that unless the church persistently demands that the whole of life shall be brought under Christ's law of service, the church itself will be brought under the assumed law of supply and demand. It will supply merely that conventional and convenient ethic which a semi-pagan civilization demands. Unless the church sets out in dead earnest to sanctify the world, the world

will set out in dead earnest to secularize the church.

A recent issue of a great Chicago daily contained an editorial which declared that the pulpit has no business to concern itself with business, or with industry, or with public policy; that the sole business of the pulpit is with marriage and baptisms and funerals and the purely mystical worship of God. If the position taken in this editorial should ever be generally accepted, even by churchmen themselves, those bitter lines of William Watson concerning the church would prove to be true:

> "Outwardly splendid as of old,
> Inwardly sparkless, void and cold,
> Her force and fire all spent and gone,
> Like the dead moon, she still shines on."

But how glad one is to note the fact that, more and more, this utterly false distinction between sacred occupations and secular occupations is being done away. Thoughtful persons are beginning to suspect that the real distinction is not between the occupations of men, but rather between the motives of men. There are no sacred callings and secular callings; there are sacred motives and secular motives. A man may be a clergyman, yet not a minister, for the reason that his motives are not the motives of Jesus, but the motives of a self-seeking politician; just as a man may be a butler, yet not a servant, because he lies down on a job. And a man may be a politician or a grocer or a manufac-

turer, and truly and splendidly a minister, for the reason that he is seeking not to enrich himself but to benefit his community. One of the most hopeful signs of this present time is the steadily increasing number of men, in every walk of life, who are beginning to regard themselves as servants of the community.

But now, what of the particular part of the will of God—the part for the individual man? How may one discover whether it is the will of God that he should be a minister in the "ministry" or a minister in business, or in politics, or in medicine, or in law, or on a farm? There are three suggestions which I shall venture to make for whatever they may be worth.

The first is this: If you happen to feel a rather strong inclination for some particular kind of work, why not conclude that your inclination is a revelation of the will of God for your career? Why should a man who is born trader—who would rather buy and sell than eat—suppose that it is his duty to go into the "ministry"? Why should he not, rather, suppose that it is his duty to go into business in the spirit of ministry? Why should a man who is an artist to his fingertips suppose that it is the will of God for him to become a missionary? Why should he not, rather, conclude that it is the will of God for him to make whatever contribution he can to a new renaissance of significant and inspiring art? And why should a man who is a born teacher suppose that it is his duty to go into his father's

business? Why should he not, rather, conclude that the divine intention for his life can be carried out only in some pulpit, or some classroom, or some missionary station? From young men who would go into the "ministry," not because they feel any liking for it, but solely because they feel that it is their duty to preach, may the good Lord in his mercy deliver us! And from young men who would go into business, not because they have any love for it, but solely because it is in the line of least resistance, or because it promises to be financially remunerative, may the good Lord likewise in his mercy deliver us!

But suppose you do not feel any very strong inclination toward any occupation. I do not mean by this that you are lazy, but only that you are hazy. Suppose that, so far as you can now see, you would be equally happy in any one of two or three or even four occupations. Shall you preach or teach, practice medicine or law, become an engineer or an architect, go into business or stay on a farm? For the very life of you, you cannot make up your mind. What then?

My second suggestion is, Consult your friends; people who know you and like you, but who are able to consider you in a somewhat more detached fashion than you are able to consider yourself. Some day every university and, indeed, every high school, will offer vocational guidance to its students, and that, of course, will be even more valuable, because it will be more scientific, than the more or

less untrained judgment of friends. But the judgments of discerning friends are worth considering when one is in doubt about the will of God for his career.

When Phillips Brooks graduated with distinction from Harvard College, he sought, and obtained, a position as teacher in the Boston Latin School. His mother had been a teacher. His maternal grandfather had been the founder of Phillips Exeter Academy. Young Phillips himself possessed rather unusual literary gifts. And it was taken for granted by everyone who knew him that, as a teacher, he would be a brilliant success. Instead, he was a conspicuous failure. The headmaster of the Latin School declared that young Mr. Brooks had in him no single element of a successful teacher, and requested his resignation. Humiliated and discouraged, Phillips Brooks made a list of the members of his class, and after each one of them, put down the occupation he had found or the profession for which he was preparing, hoping in this way to get a little light on his own torturing problem. At last, after months of waiting and worrying, he determined to seek the advice of Harvard's president, Doctor Walker, a man of whom it is said that he was born to be a confessor. After talking the matter over at considerable length, President Walker advised him to study for the ministry—and the result is now a matter of history.

My last suggestion may, I think, be most effectively conveyed in those oft-quoted words of Car-

lyle, "Doubt of any sort cannot be removed except by action. . . . Do the duty which lies nearest thee, which thou knowest to be a duty. . . . Thy second duty will already have become clearer." The way to know the will of God in large matters is to do the will of God in those small matters which present themselves day after day, and concerning which there can be no reasonable doubt what the will of God is. The way to discover the will of God for your career is to live continuously in the light of eternal values, asking each day, and many times during the day, "Lord, what wilt thou have me do?"

IV

We come, at last, to that noblest of all prayers: "Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth."

"*As in heaven.*" Over against the actual world which he knew so well, Jesus saw an ideal world which, to his eyes, was just as real, and which, for him, was a guarantee that some day the actual world would become vastly more ideal. It is probably true of a certain type of religious person that he resorts to the thought of heaven as the Chinese coolie resorts to his opium pipe, in order that he may be transported to a world where all unpleasant things are forgot. But when Jesus turned his thought to that ideal world where the angels of little children "do always behold the face of my Father"; where there is "joy over one sinner that repenteth more than over ninety and nine just persons, who have no need of repentance"; and

where men who have been "persecuted for righteousness' sake" are greatly rewarded, it was not for the purpose of obtaining a momentary forgetfulness of the hard conditions which he was facing, but, rather, for the purpose of securing strength to face them bravely and hopefully. With what depth of emotion Jesus himself must have prayed, "Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth!"

Is there any such depth of emotion possible for us? Can you and I believe in the reality of an ideal order which is at once the revelation and promise of a better world? Can we turn, sometimes, from a world where war has left its ugly footprints on the face of nature and the heart of man to a bright and happy "heaven" where creative and redeeming love prevails, and so get inspiration to do the things that need to be done to secure for our children a fairer civilization? I believe we can.

As a matter of fact, there is an ideal order to which we can turn for courage and hope. And it is not up in the skies; it is here in our midst. In Romain Rolland's *Clerambault* there is a chapter in which a little group of internationally minded men and women discuss the grounds of their faith in the possibility of a better to-morrow. It is Good Friday, 1918, but the awful massacre of men and boys goes on. One of the group has said with a bitter sigh: "Our faith in peace and human brotherhood rests in vain on reason and love. Is there any hope that they can conquer men?" Another has said: "Christ is expected for centuries; and when

he comes, he is neglected, crucified and then forgotten except by a handful of poor, ignorant wretches, good if you like, but narrow. The handful grows, and for the space of a man's life faith is in flower, but afterward it is spoiled and betrayed by success, by ambitious disciples, by the church, and so for centuries. . . . Where is the kingdom of God?" Is there any answer to this despairing question? Yes, there is, and Romain Rolland gives it through the lips of his hero. Where is the kingdom of God? "Within us," cries Clerambault; "our trials and our hopes all go to form the eternal Christ." Within that little group of internationally minded persons who, in spite of the passion and brutality of war, had retained a constant faith in human brotherhood, refused to hate, but kept alive in their hearts the spirit of reconciliation—within them was the kingdom of God.

Nor can anyone reply to this that what I am suggesting may be found only in the pages of fiction. On being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God was coming, Jesus replied: "The kingdom of God is now in your midst." It was; for he was in their midst and in him was the kingdom of God. During the centuries that have followed, the spirit of Jesus has appeared in other human lives. Might it not also be said that in Saint Francis of Assisi, in Phillips Brooks, and many another Christlike personality, *was* the kingdom of God? There are, moreover, men and women living today in whom one catches a glimpse of an ideal

order of life; and we say, "If only everybody were like him, or her, this world would be a pretty good place in which to live."

There is, then, an ideal world, a "heaven," if you please, in which the will of God is being done, and to this we too may turn for spiritual re-enforcement as we endeavor to discover the divine intention for our own lives, and to realize it.

VI

THE WORD OF GOD

The moment you open the Bible, you find yourself in the presence of men who believed that the Almighty God had spoken to them. How often it is stated that "God said unto Noah," that "the word of God came unto Abraham," that "God spake unto Moses"! In "Isaiah," at the beginning of the sixth chapter, a great preacher describes his call to the prophetic office in this fashion: "In the year that King Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up. . . . Also I heard the voice of the Lord saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" The book of Jeremiah begins in this fashion: "The words of Jeremiah the son of Hilkiah, . . . to whom the word of the Lord came"; and the book of Micah in this fashion: "The word of the Lord that came to Micah the Morasthite in the days of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah." The last book in the Old Testament begins thus: "The burden of the word of the Lord to Israel by Malachi."

The conviction that the Most High speaks to men appears, likewise, in the New Testament. An "angel of the Lord" announces to Zacharias that he will have a son of whose kingdom there shall be no end. A "voice from heaven" says con-

cerning Jesus, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." An "angel of the Lord" directs Philip to "go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza." A "heavenly vision" halts Saul on his way to Damascus, and a heaven-born impulse sends Ananias to the bedside of the stricken persecutor. The Epistle to the Hebrews begins in this fashion: "God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in *his* Son." In the last book of the New Testament a "voice from heaven" says: "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he shall dwell with them, and they shall be his people. . . . And God shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and death shall be no more; neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain any more."

I

Suppose we should open the Bible to-day as we open any other book, not with any preconceived theory as to its "inspiration," but only with a desire to discover whether it contains any word of God for us. There are certain portions of it from which we would derive little if any insight into the thought and purpose of God—the book of Judges, for instance, with its tale after tale of revolting cruelty, a book whose contents we would hardly care to have dramatized and exhibited to our children on a silver screen! But how many the

passages that would become for us a veritable "word of God"!—the twenty-third psalm; the Sermon on the Mount; the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians, etc. Passages such as these require no dogmatic theory of inspiration to commend them; they are self-authenticating. We do not need to be told that they are "inspired"; they inspire us. Deep calleth unto deep as we read them; it is as though the Soul of the universe were reaching out to direct and strengthen and comfort our needy human souls.

But is it only in the Bible that one may hope to discover any authentic "word of God"? How very embarrassing it would be if one felt obliged to answer "Yes"! Here is a confession which appears in that illuminating little book in which William Newton Clark recalls his experience of sixty years with the Bible:[1] "One Sunday evening there strolled in to hear me a pair of scientists with whom I had a slight acquaintance, one of them rather eminent in his generation. Afterward I wondered what they thought. I do not remember what my text was, but it was one of the condensed expressions of truth that abound in the First Epistle of John. I spoke of this epistle as later in origin than the book that stands at the close of the Bible, and as occupying a place at the very end of the long course of divine revelation. I appealed to its testimony as the last and highest word, the ripened fruit of God's great revealing process, the very climax of

[1] *Sixty Years with the Bible*, p. 146. Charles Scribner's Sons, publishers.

that which has come from him to his world of men. I spoke, in fact, as if nothing had been heard from God since that epistle was written. I did not know at the time how far away I was putting God from his world. But the retributive power did not overlook me. After a while a wave of remembrance swept over me, to my humiliation, and I wondered what my scientific acquaintances thought that I, a Christian minister, believed about the living God. If they believed in God at all, as I think they did, they believed in a God who did not close his work of self-expression and betake himself to silence eighteen hundred years ago, but who 'worketh hitherto,' a God self-uttering as the light; and I had been addressing them as if God had been silent to men through all these ages."

How many awful experiences men and women have been compelled to pass through since that day, nearly sixteen hundred years ago, when the New Testament assumed its present form! What repeated need of some word of guidance, cheer, hope, from a compassionate God! It is not enough to reply that people had the Bible. As a matter of fact, during most of this time they did not have the Bible. It was written in a tongue which the vast majority of them did not understand, and copies even in that tongue were relatively few, and far beyond the reach of any poor man's purse. Even though portions of the Scripture had always been as widely distributed as they are to-day, would it be enough to say that people had the

Bible? Would not that be tantamount to saying that it would be enough for me, as a father, to give my son a letter of instructions as to the best way to carry on in the world, and then sever all connections with him during the rest of his life?

Consider also another matter. Only with great difficulty, and sometimes not at all, have human beings been able to remain on a high level of thought and aspiration and practical endeavor. The prophet, with his splendid vision of a glorified human society, is followed by the apocalyptist, with his consuming interest in the physical furnishings of seven heavens and as many hells. Jesus, with his amazing ability to "strip the accidental from the soul of the eternal," is followed by disciples who spent a lot of precious time trying to decide whether or not a Gentile Christian should be asked to submit to the rite of circumcision. Saint Paul, with his supreme emphasis upon the spirit of Christ, is followed by politically minded ecclesiastics to whom the character of a man's belief appears of greater importance than the character of his life, and the building of a powerful ecclesiastical machine of more importance than the development of Christian hearts.

And what is the worship of the Virgin Mary but a concession to pagan belief in winsome goddesses? What is the high mass but an adaptation of certain practices of the Oriental mystery religions? What is premillennialism, and the whole world view which

accompanies and supports it, but a revival in modern times of those apocalyptic expectations which, nineteen hundred years ago, stood in the way of Jesus' purer and nobler conception of the kingdom of God? A representative of this type of thought declared not long ago that when Jesus ascended into heaven he ascended in the identical body in which he had been laid away in Joseph's tomb, and that when he returns to earth it will be in this self-same body; that the wounds in his hands and feet will still be visible; and that he will descend to the exact spot in Palestine from which he ascended. What is this but a revival of that hopelessly materialistic type of mind to which nothing appears real unless it can be seen and touched—the mind which, nineteen hundred years ago, demanded a "sign" from One whose whole life was a revelation of stupendous spiritual realities? Such facts as these, however unpleasant, need to be faced.

Only with extreme difficulty, if at all, are men able to remain on a high spiritual plane. How desirable, then, it is that not during one period only, but during every period of human history, God should speak directly to attentive spirits, raise up new prophets, and summon men on and up to higher conceptions, purer aspirations, and nobler endeavor. To feel obliged to say that only in the Bible may any authentic "word of God" be found would, indeed, be embarrassing. But we are, fortunately, delivered from such embarrassment. There are a thousand other words of God.

II

There is one aspect of the world of which the biblical writers take little account—beauty. It would, of course, be going too far to say that there is in the Bible no appreciation of beauty. The prophet who wrote concerning his country, "His beauty shall be as the olive tree"; the psalmist who wrote, "The heavens declare the glory of God"; the Master who said, "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: and yet I say unto you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these"—they, surely, were not unmindful of the loveliness of the world. But the fact remains that the biblical writers do not as a rule reveal very much interest in beauty. They are far more concerned about ethics than they are about æsthetics. They speak of "the beauty of holiness," but never of the holiness of beauty. And how very significant the fact that the race to which they belonged never gave to the world any work of enduring art—anything comparable to the Parthenon, or the Venus de Milo, or the Apollo Belvedere. The ancient Hebrews were the spiritual prototypes of those seventeenth-century Puritans whose supreme concerns were just two—religion and righteousness; and far be it from me, or anyone, to belittle such concerns. But it must be acknowledged that both the ancient Hebrew and the modern Puritan missed the "word of God" which is given in beauty.

Professor J. Arthur Thompson has called atten-

tion to the fact that "apart from crippled, diseased, or parasitical organisms; apart from the thoroughgoing parasites which often bear the stigma of dishonor; apart also from some unfinished organisms, hidden away in embryonic wrappings, all living creatures, seen in their natural surroundings, are things of beauty."[1] Think of the beauty of those wild creatures which are in danger of being exterminated at the hands of stupid bipeds who have not learned that it is more fun to hunt with a camera than with a gun. Think, also, of the beauty of birds and flowers and trees and ferns and moss and crystals and snowflakes. And of dewy mornings and starlit nights! Beauty, beauty, everywhere! Is not this also a "word of God"? If a poet may say of a beautiful woman, "her temple-face was chiseled from within," is it not possible for intelligent faith to insist that a beautiful world is the revelation of a beautiful Spirit; that it is, indeed, a sacrament, the visible form of an invisible grace? Even Carlyle, who was himself in the spiritual succession of the Hebrew prophets, certainly more Hebrew than Greek, was wont to insist that "every object has a divine beauty in it—is a window through which we may look into Infinitude itself."

It is a noteworthy fact that our own pleasure in beauty is always enhanced when others see what we see. "Come here," you say, "and see this marvelous sunset;" or, "Have you seen the lake to-

[1] *Science and Religion*, p. 139. Charles Scribner's Sons, publishers.

day?" or, "Look at that star!" When you catch your first glimpse of a famous mountain you experience an ecstasy of delight; and then, a moment later, you experience something akin to pain until you have shared your vision with another sensitive spirit. When it comes to material possessions we are prone to think of self; but when it comes to sunrises and sunsets and moonlight on the water we are bound to think of others if our own joy is to be full. Beauty lifts us above "the noise of selfish strife," above "the cries of race and clan," into a world where appreciative spirits of whatever race or class are at one. If beauty, then, is not a "word of God," what is?

III

At the close of that famous "haystack prayer meeting," near the campus of Williams College, at which the American foreign-missionary enterprise was born, young Mills and his fellow students arose from their knees and sang a stanza of one of Isaac Watts' hymns:

> "Let all the heathen writers join
> To form one perfect book;
> Great God, if once compared with thine,
> How mean their writings look!"

There is still a lingering belief that God interested himself in the Hebrew people in a way in which he never interested himself in any other people, and that the "inspiration" to be found in

the Hebrew Scriptures is different not only in degree but in kind from the inspiration which appears in the sacred writings of any other race. Different in degree it undoubtedly is; but is it just, or even helpful, to contend that it is different also in kind? The early Christian "Fathers," some of whom were Greeks and others Romans, did not hesitate to recognize Socrates and Plato and Seneca as minor prophets. And to-day, scholars who possess first-hand acquaintance with the literature of the Orient feel constrained to acknowledge the presence of "inspiration" in many a saint and poet and philosopher of the Eastern world. Among Christian missionaries, some of the wisest are saying that for the adherents of the great pre-Christian religions, the best road to Christianity is not by the laborious route of the Old Testament, but by the truest and noblest of their own sacred writings. Bishop Brent has gone so far as to suggest that it would be a good thing to bind up representative Oriental scriptures with the New Testament.

Why should anybody want to claim that there is any people among whom God has left himself without a witness? What kind of God would that God be who should make it possible for the representatives of one race to say:

> "Thou wilt show me the way of life,
> In thy presence is fullness of joy,"

but leave the representatives of other races to stumble along in the darkness without any knowl-

edge or joy of his presence? The fact of the matter seems to be that when we claim "inspiration" for the Hebrew Scriptures, but refuse to acknowledge its presence in the scriptures of other races, we are attributing to the Almighty certain prejudices which are only too evident in ourselves. Surely, it might be said that God spake unto Confucius, that the word of God came unto Gautama, and that God is speaking even now to Mahatma Gandhi.

IV

May we not also discover a "word of God" in all the productions of human genius? Jesus was often amazed at the words of wisdom that fell from his lips. "The words that I speak unto you," he remarked on one occasion, "I speak not of myself." In some degree that has been the experience of many another gifted spirit who could not escape the conviction that he was merely a medium through which a more than human power was working. Henry Ward Beecher insisted that there were times when it was not he that was talking; when he was caught up and carried away so that he knew not whether he was in the body or out of the body. Handel declared that when he was composing the "Messiah" he verily thought he did see God in his glory; and Haydn, listening to some production of his genius, more than once cried out, "It is not from me; it is from above!" Goethe maintained that "all productivity of the highest kind . . . is in no one's control and is elevated above all earthly

power." And many another poet has felt about himself, as Goethe did, that he was "a vessel found worthy to receive the divine influence."

The conviction which great orators and musicians and poets have had concerning the source of their genius has been shared by thousands of their fellows who sat under the spell of their eloquence, or listened enraptured to their music, or read with quickened pulse beat their poetry. Men went away from the preaching of Phillips Brooks in the conviction that they had been lifted into contact with things eternal, that the presence of the Most High was round about them. Might one not say, therefore, in the sublimely daring language of the Old Testament, that "God said unto Beecher," that "the word of the Lord came unto Handel," that "God spake unto Goethe"?

V

Surely, we may discover a "word of God" in chapter after chapter of human history. Reading the pitiful, tragic story of the Inquisition, we know what God thinks of any such attempt as that which has been made in Tennessee to establish scientific truth by majority vote. Reading a chapter which might be entitled "The Rise and Fall of the American Slave Power," we know what the "word of God" is concerning slavery. Five days after the battle of Antietam Mr. Lincoln called a meeting of his Cabinet. After he had amused some of them, and shocked others, especially Stanton, by reading

from Artemus Ward's latest book, the chapter on a "High-Handed Outrage at Utica," he laid down the book, his face and tone underwent instant change, and he said to them very solemnly, "Gentlemen, when the rebel army was at Fredericksburg, I determined, as soon as it should be driven out of Maryland, to issue a proclamation of emancipation. I said nothing to anyone, but I made the promise to myself—and to my Maker. The rebel army is now driven out, and I am going to fulfill that promise." If a biblical historian were chronicling this story, he would probably do so in some such fashion as this: "And the Lord spake unto Abraham Lincoln saying: I have seen the affliction of my people in the southland. I have heard their cry by reason of their overseers. I know their sorrows, and I am determined to deliver them. Do thou, therefore, issue a proclamation of emancipation. And Abraham Lincoln said unto God, Of what avail would it be for me to issue a proclamation of emancipation when my armies win no victories to give it effect? And he said, Grant unto thy servant victory on the field of battle; then will I issue the proclamation. And soon thereafter, at Antietam, the enemy was beaten, for the Lord of Hosts was arrayed against him; and Abraham Lincoln did even as he had promised; and it came to pass that four million souls, both men and women and children, were delivered from the yoke of bondage."

Reading the political and economic history of

Europe during the years 1870–1914, we know—at least we ought to know—what God thinks about "spheres of influence," and "economic concessions," and high "protective tariffs," and "favored nations' rights," and the determination of one nation to secure its own economic advantage at whatever cost to the economic welfare of other nations, and "balances of power," and the notion that "the way to have peace is to be prepared for war." The laws which govern human societies—not the paper laws but the inherent laws—are expressions of the will of God. When, therefore, preparation for war leads to war, when economic conflict issues in military conflict, when national selfishness leads to national disaster, we have every reason to believe that a "word of God" has been spoken which statesmen, bankers, business men, and everybody else would do well to hear and heed.

And when pioneering industrialists, such as William Hapgood, dare to organize an industry in accordance with Christ's "golden rule," and demonstrate not only the ideality but the practicality of such an experiment, has not another "word of God" been spoken which our generation would do well to hear and heed?

VI

What, let us finally ask, is the supreme "word of God"? At this point one may only venture to express a personal conviction. My own may be given in a statement which appears in the prologue

of the fourth Gospel: "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us . . . full of grace and truth." Jesus, I believe, is the supreme "word" that God has yet spoken to mankind.

I believe, therefore, that by Jesus the authenticity of every other reputed word of God ought to be tested. When I read in the first book of Samuel that God directed Saul to march out and massacre a neighboring people, all their old men, women and children, even babes at the breast, I conclude that the author was mistaken. I cannot reconcile that statement with the word of God spoken in Jesus. When I read in the second book of Kings that because some mischievous boys dared to call a prophet an old bald head, God caused two she-bears to come out of a wood and tear them limb from limb, I conclude that the author was a bit sensitive on the subject of bald heads; that he was, perhaps, attributing to the Almighty his own emotional reaction to the incident; that he was, in any event, quite mistaken. I cannot reconcile his word on the matter with the supreme word spoken in Jesus. And when I read in the book of Ecclesiastes: "Be not righteous overmuch; neither make thyself overwise; why shouldest thou destroy thyself?" I say to myself, "This, surely, is not a true word of God." I cannot reconcile the moral timidity of such advice with the moral heroism which breathes in every syllable of that supreme word of God spoken in Jesus.

I cannot believe that God once said, "An eye for

an eye; a tooth for a tooth," and later said, "Love your enemies," or that he said, "Be not righteous overmuch; . . . why shouldest thou destroy thyself?" and later said, "Blessed are ye when men shall reproach you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets that were before you," any more than I can believe that two plus three once made five but now make six.

From one point of view God's supreme word is a disturbing word. Was it of Jesus that the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews was thinking when he wrote, "The word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword . . . and quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart"? He might have been; for God's supreme word is living and active. He is sifting out the hearts of men before his judgment seat. He is saying to certain clergymen, "You are blind leaders of the blind." He is saying to certain laymen, "You tithe mint and anise and cummin, but neglect the weightier matters of the law." He is saying to certain rich men, "You cannot serve God and riches." He is saying to certain high-placed ecclesiastics, "What shall it profit you if you are called of men Bishop, and continually flattered by socially ambitious laymen, and ecclesiastically ambitious clergymen, but fail to secure for yourselves any place in the kingdom of God?" He is saying to

certain statesmen, "What shall it profit you if you satisfy the immediate demands of a prejudiced and passionate constituency and so manage to keep yourself in power, but lose your place in history?" He is saying to certain governments, "You are like unto a foolish man who built his house upon the sand, and when the rains descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and smote upon that house it fell, and great was the fall thereof." He is confronting militarism with the saying, "They that take the sword shall perish with the sword." He is confronting imperialism—the exploitation of undeveloped lands and backward peoples—with the saying, "Whosoever would be great among you, let him be the servant of all, not the exploiter of the weak." He is confronting child labor with the saying, "Whosoever shall cause one of these little ones that believe on me to stumble, it is profitable for him that a great millstone should be hanged about his neck, and that he should be sunk in the depths of the sea." He is confronting race hatred with the suggestion, "One is your Father, and all ye are brethren." From one point of view, could anything be more disturbing than this supreme word of God?

But suppose it is really true that Jesus of Nazareth is at once revelation of the heart of Reality and an earnest of the goal of history. How reassuring, then, becomes that supreme word which God has spoken in him. Men may dare to dream of a day when the rough places in industry shall be

made smooth, and the crooked places in politics shall be made straight, and every mountain and every hill of unearned wealth shall be brought low, and every valley of preventable poverty shall be filled up, and all flesh shall be given equality of opportunity, and the latent energies of millions of men shall be released, and the god of war shall give way to the Prince of Peace.

The author of the last book in the New Testament describes his vision of the triumphant Christ: "And I saw the heaven opened; and behold a white horse, and he that sat thereon. . . . And his name is called The Word of God." Not yet is God's supreme Word fully heard the world around. Not yet are all who have heard it ready to believe it. Not yet are all who believe it ready to act upon it. But those who do act upon it become more and more persuaded of the eternal truth of it, and more and more determined that it shall be heard the world around until from East and West and North and South shall come the acknowledgment: In him is life; in him is beauty; in him is joy; in him, and him alone, are universal prosperity and universal peace.

VII

THE DISCOVERY OF GOD

Readers of Tolstoy's *Confession* will recall the period of doubt and despair through which he passed. The author of *Anna Karenina* and *War and Peace* had much to be thankful for. He loved and was loved. He possessed a great estate, good health, fame. But suddenly his life seemed to come to a dead stop. There were questions which he scarcely dared to ask and yet must ask: What was the meaning of life? What of its beginning? What of its end? Like Banquo's ghost, these questions would not down. But he could find no answer to them. And in the absence of any understanding of the meaning of life it seemed to him a fearful thing to keep on living. He was tormented at times by the thought of self-destruction. He would hide away a piece of cord, he tells us, lest in some moment of ungovernable depression he should use it to hang himself from the rafters of the little room in which he slept alone. Finally, Tolstoy turned for help to the Russian peasant. There he was, the man with the hoe, in his face the "emptiness of ages," on his back "the burden of the world." Yet this unprivileged peasant not only consented to live, but managed to extract from life a certain amount of real joy. What was

his secret? Tolstoy determined to discover it. What he discovered was that the Russian peasant did not live by his black bread alone, but by every word that proceeded out of the mouth of God. He lived, that is to say, by trust in God. One day, when he was alone in the forest, Tolstoy suddenly realized that he himself had lived, really lived, only when he had believed in God. At the very thought of God "delightful waves of life stirred within him." Everything about him seemed alive. Everything had a meaning. But the moment he no longer believed, life seemed to stop. Tolstoy came at last to this conclusion: "God is life; to know God is to live."

Since, then, God is life, and to know him is to live, we may confidently expect that generation after generation of human beings will seek to discover him.

I

In order to discover God, one needs to develop what Francis Thompson called "the child heart." "Know you," said he, "what it is to be a child? . . . It is to believe in love, to believe in loveliness, to believe in belief. . . . It is to turn pumpkins into coaches, mice into horses, lowness into loftiness and nothing into everything. . . . It is

> "To see a world in a grain of sand,
> And heaven in a wild flower;
> To hold infinity in the palm of your hand,
> And eternity in an hour."

Now this, on first thought, may appear to be nothing better than the advice which the Queen gives to Alice in Wonderland. When her majesty asserts that she is one hundred and one years and five months and one day old, Alice says: "I cannot believe that." To which the queen replies: "Try again; draw a long breath and shut your eyes." But that, of course, is not the advice which Francis Thompson gives. He is not suggesting that we should close our eyes, take a long breath and try to believe the unbelievable. When he says that a child is able to turn pumpkins into coaches, mice into horses, lowness into loftiness, nothing into everything, does he not mean to suggest that to the mind of a child nothing appears too good to be true? Suppose, then, you and I should cultivate this childlike conviction that nothing is too good to be true. Some one mentions the name of God. Some one remarks that God is alive. Some one insists that God is not far away, that he is the very life of our lives, the very soul of our souls. And the weary, worried, grown-up in us sighs: "Ah, but that is too good to be true." What if, at that moment, the reawakened child in us should stand up and say: "Too good to be true? Too good not to be true!"

What I am trying to say in the simplest kind of way Sir Oliver Lodge has said in the language of philosophy. "I will not believe," he says, "that it lies within the power of man to have thoughts and feelings higher than the reality of things."

Men have conceived the idea of God. They have thought of God as the source of all truth and of all beauty and of all goodness. They have tried their utmost to discover truth and to formulate the truth which they believed themselves to have discovered; and they have confessed:

> "Our little systems have their day;
> They have their day and cease to be;
> They are but broken lights of Thee,
> And Thou, O Lord, art more than they."

They have endeavored likewise to create beauty with paint and chisel and stone laid upon stone, until the glory of a Gothic cathedral has begotten in generation after generation a feeling of awe; and then they have confessed that the beauty which their own hands have wrought is but an imperfect copy of a beauty that transcends the power of human skill to portray. They have struggled to achieve goodness, and in case after case have achieved it, only to confess that they stood in the presence of One whose perfect goodness filled them with shame. What then? Is it possible for a man to conceive an ideal of truth, of beauty, of goodness that is higher than the reality of things? Do those noblest intuitions of the race which survive the wreck of the centuries spell illusion? If only we possessed the child heart—the need of which a Greater than Francis Thompson stressed—would we not say of those noblest intuitions that they spell, not illusion, but the most certain of realities?

II

The number of one-hundred-per-cent atheists to-day is exceedingly small. It has always been small. The human mind cannot permanently rest in the notion that the universe is irrational; that there is no intelligence in that which has produced intelligence, and no goodness in that out of which goodness has come. But it is one thing to believe in God, another thing to become aware of God. Many people whose minds accept the fact of God bewail their inability to feel the presence of God.

This inability is due, in part, to the fact that the world of spirit is both invisible and intangible, and we earth-bound creatures are prone to associate reality only with that which can be seen and touched. "Seeing," we say, "is believing."

And yet, when we stop and think, we know perfectly well that there is a whole world of reality which no eye can see and no hand can touch. When, for instance, you look at a flag, your flag, what is it that causes your heart to beat a bit faster? Something that you can see? Or something that you cannot see? Surely it is not anything that you can see through eyes of the flesh. That bit of bunting with the alternating stripes of red and white, and the blue corner, and the white stars—it is, no doubt, as beautiful a thing as any flag that floats. But is it the bunting itself that brings a little lump into your throat and tears, it may be, into your eyes? No, it is what the bit of bunting has, once and again, stood for in the life of

the world, and must, under God, continue to stand for through all the years! You enter a great cathedral—York, Winchester, Westminster Abbey, Notre Dame, Rheims, Amiens. Instinctively you remove your hat. Instinctively you lower your voice to a whisper; and, if you are a normal person, instinctively you turn in your thinking from things temporal to things eternal. Why? Because of what you see through eyes of flesh? Partly; but only that? No! Those marvelous naves and soaring arches and the vaulted dome become for you a sacrament, the visible sign of an invisible spirit, the sinning, suffering, aspiring and as yet undefeated spirit of mankind. You stand uncovered in a great cathedral, your feet planted securely upon the floor, but your mind has been lifted into a world of which that great cathedral itself is but a symbol, and compared with which the world of flesh appears insubstantial. Pick up Charles Rann Kennedy's well-known play, "The Servant in the House."[1] Follow the Bishop of Benares as he describes the cathedral which he has built over in India, not of stones, but of human souls: "Its spans and arches are the joined hands of comrades. Up in its heights and spaces are inscribed the numberless musings of all the dreamers of the world. Sometimes, in the silence of the night, one may hear the hammerings of the comrades up in the dome—the comrades that have climbed ahead." As you think of the life and labors of men like Bishop Thoburn in India, and

[1] Published by Harper & Brothers.

David Livingstone in Africa, and John Wesley in England, and Francis Asbury in America, are you not ready to say that the cathedral which they have built, although no eye can see it and no hand can touch it, and no foot can enter it, is every whit as real as Saint Peter's or Saint Paul's?

There is, then, a whole world of reality which no eye can see and no hand can touch. But whether or no this invisible, intangible world will appear real to us will depend upon the kind of life we are living

Here is a man of whom, in the language of Saint Paul, it must sadly be said that his god is his belly. He lives mostly to eat and drink and toddle. He is, once more in the language of the great apostle, "of the earth, earthy." What for him is the real world? Wine and women and song.

Here is a man whose god is gold. He lives, not to eat, but to get. He sometimes tells himself that what he really cares for is not money, but the fascination of the game of making money. But if that be true, why does he hold on to so much of his money? Why does he consent to make money in ways that injure his fellows? If what he really cares for is the joy of creation, why does he not attempt to create a better world for coming generations to live in? But no, having made a pile, he can think of nothing better to do than to make it a bigger pile. What for him is the real world? Only the world of material values.

Here is a man who has become, as he will repeatedly tell you, disillusioned. He acknowledges

that he has been fooled once, but is emphatic in his assertion that he will never be fooled again. He has mighty little faith in men—or in women either. Most people, he holds, are either knaves or fools. How futile then, and dangerous, this modern talk of world peace; as if knaves could ever be persuaded to act honorably; as if fools could ever be taught to think clearly; as if knaves and fools had not always fought like dogs over a bone, and always will! What for this man is the real world? Only a world of trickery and stupidity.

But here, also, is a fourth man to whom you may, if you wish, attach a name. You may call him Socrates or Gautama, or Marcus Aurelius or Saint Francis of Assisi, or John Wesley or David Livingstone, or Robert Browning or Ralph Waldo Emerson, or Henry David Thoreau or Leo Tolstoy, or Abraham Lincoln or Phillips Brooks. What for him is the real world? Well, he is, of course, not unaware of the fact that there is a world of the flesh, and a world of the almighty dollar, and a world in which trickery and stupidity make angels weep. But he is also aware of a world whose foundations are the fidelities of unsung multitudes of ordinary men; whose uprights and crossbeams are the skill and devotion of undecorated heroes; whose windows are the self denials of saints and the bloody sweat of martyrs; and whose soaring towers are the dreams of prophetic spirits.

Most of us must sadly confess that sometimes God and, indeed, every great spiritual value, seems

horribly unreal to us. But may we not also testify that once or twice we have stood on the very threshold of the world of spirit, and even crossed the threshold, and stood enraptured, our eyes wide open to life's supreme realities, our hearts bathed in a peace which passes understanding? Is there anyone among us who cannot recall some hours when the starlit heavens declared to him the glory of God? Or when mysterious music became for him, as Carlyle once declared great music does become, "a kind of inarticulate, unfathomable speech, which lifts us to the verge of the infinite, and lets us peep over"? Is there anyone who cannot recall at least one occasion when he saw divinity in a great human soul? Or when, as he placed a cup of cold water to the feverish lips of some fellow mortal, he suddenly found himself in the very presence of God? Well, the hours when God and every great spiritual value seemed to fade away into the darkness—were they not hours when we were living softly and selfishly, preoccupied with the thought of sex, or the thought of self? And the hours when God seemed to be life's supreme reality—were they not hours when we had lost sight of self in contemplation of the vastness of the heavens, or of the beauty of the earth, or of the appealing need of other human souls?

III

Not every one discovers God in nature. In the long ago, a weary, disillusioned Roman stood one day at the foot of Mount Olympus, the legendary

home of the gods of ancient Greece. "But I," said he, "saw nothing but snow and ice." One man lifts up his eyes unto the hills, and his heart grows quiet, because the hills become for him a sacrament, the visible form of an invisible spirit of enduring, dependable strength. Another man lifts up his eyes unto the hills and sees only snow and ice. One man looks at the night sky and chants:

> "The heavens declare the glory of God;
> And the firmament showeth his handiwork."

Another man doggedly complains, "I have searched the heavens with my telescope, and nowhere have I found God."

The fact of the matter seems to be:

> ". . . Earth's crammed with heaven
> And every common bush afire with God.
> But only he who sees takes off his shoes,
> The rest sit round it and pluck blackberries."

Or, as Edna St. Vincent Millay has put it:[1]

> "The world stands out on either side
> No wider than the heart is wide;
> Above the world is stretched the sky
> No higher than the soul is high.
> The heart can push the sea and land
> Farther away on either hand;
> The soul can split the sky in two
> And let the face of God shine through;
> But east and west will pinch the heart
> That cannot keep them pushed apart,
> And he whose soul is flat—the sky
> Will cave in on him by and by."

[1] From *Renascence and Other Poems.* Published by Harper & Brothers. Copyright, 1917, by Edna St. Vincent Millay.

The world we live in is as big as we are—no bigger; as wonderful as we are—no more so. Only that man will discover the glory of God in nature who has something, at least, of the glory of God in his own soul.

IV

Not every one discovers the footsteps of God in history. One man sees in history a power not ourselves that is making for righteousness. Another man sees in history an eternal circle in which civilizations rise only to fall—like that legendary king of France who, with fifty men, marched up a hill and down again. One man discovers in history a movement out of darkness into light, out of brutality into brotherhood, out of fear into faith and good will and peace. Another man discovers in history only a continuous struggle for power. Indeed, the self-same man may, at different periods of his life, have very different feelings about history. In his youth Tennyson wrote "Locksley Hall," in which he said:

"Not in vain the distance beacons. Forward, forward let us range;
Let the great world spin forever down the ringing grooves of change."

But the world paid little heed to this magnificent invitation. And in his old age he wrote "Locksley Hall Sixty Years After," in which he described with accurate and awful realism the condition of England's slums, and reflected:

"Evolution ever climbing after some ideal good,
And Reversion ever dragging Evolution in the mud."

Why is it that to different men—and sometimes even to the same man at different periods in his life—history presents such widely differing aspects? There are, it seems to me, two reasons.

One is that some people take the short view of history; others take the long view. If you take the short view, if you "see by the morning paper," and only by the morning paper, you may find it difficult, perhaps impossible, to believe that there is in history any power that is making for righteousness. For does it now not appear that Cain is still slaying his brother; that Absalom is still breaking his father's heart; that Judas is still betraying Jesus for thirty pieces of silver, or even less; and that a multitude of men are still stoning their prophets while alive and building monuments to them after they are dead? Or you may, perhaps, begin by persuading yourself that the great world will spin forever "down the ringing grooves of change"—that progress will be certain and continuous. And then, sixty years later, you may end by wondering whether evolution is not just one part of a disappointing equation of which the other part is devolution; whether the world does not move forward a little only to slip back to the point whence it started; whether, in sober truth, any permanent progress is ever made.

But if, on the other hand, you take the long view of history, if you go back to the day when the first

man turned his face from the clod, and then consider what the succeeding centuries have revealed of human sin, yes; of lust and greed and hate and barbarism, yes; but also of human aspiration and human attainment; of men crying, "Create in me a clean heart"; of men saying: "Our Lord is able to deliver us from the burning, fiery furnace. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, we will not serve thy gods nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up"; of men praying, "If it be possible, let this cup pass away from me. Nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done"; of men giving their all, even their very lives, to the end that some slight advance may be made toward truth or justice or brotherhood—if you take the long view of history, will you not find it difficult not to believe that there is in our human world a power not ourselves that is making for righteousness? Through all the long, slow, costly process, will you not be able to discover the footprints of a living, loving, advancing God?

Some men take the short view of history; others, the long view. And that, no doubt, is one reason why history presents different aspects to different men. But is there not also another reason? Is there not at least some truth in the suggestion that men see in history what they find in themselves? Does not history become for each one of us a vast mirror in which we see the reflection of our own souls? If we are steeped in sensuality, we are apt to see in history only the blind and brutish demand

of physical desire—a long drawn-out novel of the sort written by D. H. Lawrence, Sherwood Anderson, and Ben Hecht. If we are steeped in selfishness, we are likely to see in history only the attempt of individuals and of nations to secure a place in the sun—Nietzsche's philosophy translated into life. But if we ourselves are struggling to secure pure hands and a clean heart, are we not apt to find in history a similar struggle? And if we ourselves are seeking first the kingdom of God, are we not likely to suppose that there is

> ". . . one far-off divine event,
> To which the whole creation moves"?

Even in "Locksley Hall Sixty Years After" Tennyson expresses the hope that love in the end will conquer all; because in the aged poet's own heart love was conquering all.

V

Not every one discovers God in his own soul. One man—James Russell Lowell—describes an hour when he clearly felt the presence of God in him and round about him; when the whole room seemed full of God. Another man insists that he has never known such an hour. Why this difference? There are, no doubt, many reasons of which I shall venture to name only two.

In one of his sermons to Oxford students, Dean Inge suggested: "If we spend sixteen hours daily of our waking life in thinking about the affairs of the world, and about five minutes in thinking

about God, it is quite natural and inevitable that this world will appear two hundred times more real to us than God." One reason why some of us do not discover the presence of God in our own souls is just because we give him but very little opportunity to reveal himself. What chance would poetry have to appeal to our imagination if we never read any of it? What chance would a sunset have to hush and awe our spirits if we never stopped long enough to watch the great golden disk, sinking beneath the horizon, leaving a glorious afterglow in the western sky? What chance does God have to appear in our consciousness if we seldom give him a thought?

We now know that ever since man appeared upon this planet the air has been vibrant with messages. John Wesley in London might have heard Francis Asbury taking his ordination vows in Baltimore. Lord Palmerston at No. 10 Downing Street might have heard Abraham Lincoln delivering his immortal address at Gettysburg. Henry the Eighth, in the midst of his philandering, might have heard Martin Luther acquitting himself with a good conscience in Worms. Tiberius Cæsar in Rome might have heard Jesus in Galilee laying down principles that were destined to undermine his imperial power. The air for ages has been vibrant with messages, but not until men learned how to "tune in" were they heard. In all generations God has been men's dwelling place; in him they have lived and moved and had their being. But only to those who have

taken the trouble to "tune in" has he been able to reveal himself.

Then, too, as Donald Hankey reminded us, religion is betting your life that there is a God. And that, many of us have never done. We have repeated the creeds in which the existence of God is so bravely affirmed. We have sung the hymns in which the glory of God is so exultingly declared. But have we ever really committed ourselves to this mighty faith? Have we ever ventured to live as though it were true?

There are some truths—the greatest of all—which can be discovered only in action. You try to say to some man, who needs to hear it said, that it is better to be chaste than licentious; that the fleeting intoxication of a lustful moment, followed as it always is by a sickening sense of uncleanness, is not to be compared to the delicious sense of physical and moral fitness that is born of a pure heart. "Prove it!" he retorts. Can you do it? No, only he himself can "prove" it. You try to say to some young or middle-aged flapper, who needs to hear it said, that a thoughtless, irresponsible, self-centered life is as moonlight unto sunlight, as water unto wine, compared with the kind of life that Miss Jane Addams has lived in Hull House. "Prove it!" she demands. But, of course, you cannot "prove" it; the truth of what you are saying can be discovered only by experiment. You try to say to some tempted, troubled spirit, "There is One who is able to do for you far more abundantly

than you ask or think. God is not the Great Illusion. He is the great Reality in whom you live, if only you were aware of it, and in whom you might find rest for your weariness, strength for your weakness, light for your darkness, and salvation for your sin." "Prove it!" he pleads. But he alone can "prove" it by launching out into the deep of a great adventure.

How very significant that ancient biblical story of the three Hebrew youths who, because they refused to surrender their most vital convictions, were cast into a burning fiery furnace, yet not consumed; with whom, as they stood unscathed in the fire, there appeared to be a fourth person "like a son of the gods." What we have here is clearly not literal history, but spiritual history. When men dare to risk everything in the name of some worthy ideal, they become aware of life's supreme and eternal realities. They feel as if they were in the very presence of God. In that fascinating volume called *South,* in which he relates his experiences while exploring in the region of the south pole, Sir Ernest Shackleton states that "during that long and racking march of thirty-six hours over the unnamed mountains and glaciers of South Georgia," it seemed to him often that he and the other two members of his little party were "four, not three." He said nothing about this to his companions, but afterward one of them remarked to him, "I had a curious feeling on the march that there was another person with us." Well, amateur

arm-chair psychologists may ascribe this experience to tense nerves, the awful sense of loneliness begotten in the vast silence of antarctic wastes, or to any other prosaic cause which inexperience of the deeper side of reality may suggest to them. They may put it down in their notebook as an illustration of the susceptibility even of strong and intelligent men to strange hallucinations. But over against this all too facile "explanation" of a great experience is the testimony of thousands of valiant men who, engaged in heroic quests, braving in the name of some ideal the wrath of the elements, or the even fiercer wrath of their prejudice-blinded fellows, have had the conviction that they were not alone, that the almighty God was with them.

Is not that the meaning of those testimonies which came from the lips of gallant men in the days before the awful revelations of the Secret Treaties and the tragic betrayals of Versailles shook the faith of the world? When men *thought* they were fighting for great ideals, giving their lives for a better world; when they themselves, in their heart of hearts, were embarked upon a great crusade, they could write, as one young American did to his father, "As I buckled on my gas mask, and trudged into the dark, I never felt so near to God."

VI

For unknown centuries, men have lifted their heads, and sometimes their hands, when they prayed. And nothing, surely, could be more beau-

tiful, or more true, than the uplifted head and the upraised hand as a symbolical recognition of Him who dwelleth in the high and holy places, and with him also that is of a humble and contrite spirit. But how needful it is to remember that God is not "up there." What is "up there" for us is "down there" for persons who live on the other side of the globe. What we call the sky is just the upper part of the atmosphere which encircles the earth. And "above the sky" is what? Utter darkness and intense cold.

If "God is a spirit," it is ridiculous for us to try to locate him. It is equally ridiculous for us to go through life in the secret hope that some day we shall be able to see him as we do the moon. No such day will ever dawn in this world, or in any world.

"Behold, I go forward, but he is not *there;*
And backward, but I cannot perceive him;
On the left hand, when he doth work, but I cannot behold him;
He hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him."

To this complaint the answer is, and must ever be, "Of course not. Through the eyes in your head you can no more see that Divine Spirit whom the ages have called God than you can see that human spirit whom you call your mother, your wife, or your child."

One of Tolstoy's short stories bears the significant title, *Where Love Is God Is*. This furnishes us the clue that we need. We must find God in spiritual experience or we shall never find him at all. Where love is God is—really is. Where truth is God is. Where beauty is God is. We may discover God in any forest where beauty is being revealed, or in any laboratory where truth is being disclosed, or in any human spirit in which love abides. And surely we shall discover him if one day we fare forth upon some noble adventure to secure a better, happier world.

VIII

PRAYER AND THE CITY OF GOD

EVERY normal person has moods in which the impulse to pray is almost irresistible. You live for days, for weeks perhaps, without thinking very much about the mystery of life. It is, no doubt, quite literally true, as you tell your friends, that you have been too busy to think. But at last comes a breathing spell; comes also, perhaps, a thinking spell; and you find yourself asking such questions as these: What is the meaning of life? What ought I to do? What may I hope for? You are face to face, then, with the great mystery, and you feel an impulse to pray.

One day you become strangely conscious of the fact that you are you, and not somebody else. In many respects you are just like other people; and yet, between you and other people, even those with whom you are most intimately acquainted, there is some subtle difference which causes you to wonder whether anybody fully understands you. You feel somewhat terrifically alone in the world. Again you feel an impulse to pray.

You are loath to acknowledge it, but bitter experience forces you to realize that you have made a pretty serious mistake. Your judgment has been faulty; you have made a wrong choice. Or it may

be that not your head but your heart has betrayed you; what you have done is not merely a foolish thing, but a mean, selfish, cowardly thing. You pity yourself or you condemn yourself; you feel wretchedly wrong and unhappy. Again comes the impulse to pray.

Another day your heart is singing. You have met with a glad surprise. Things have turned out better than you had any right to expect. You are deeply, humbly grateful. You want to say, "Thank you," to somebody. You feel an impulse to say it to God.

You grow weary of having merely a "good time." You realize that a perpetual round of petty gaieties is leading you only to physical weariness and spiritual boredom. You begin to experience a fierce desire to make something of yourself; to do something worth while; not merely to dawdle, but to dare. Again you feel an impulse to pray. Your new desire to do something worth while opens your eyes to the enormity of humanity's problem —the ignorance that must be enlightened; the inertia that must be overcome; the lust and greed and hate and cowardice that must somehow be dealt with. Who is equal to such an undertaking? Out of an almost overwhelming recognition of your own inadequacy comes, once more, the impulse to pray.

And then, one day, you find yourself standing in the presence of death. Yesterday this man whom you knew and loved was alive. You spoke

to him and he replied. You took his hand in yours and felt the pressure of his fingers. You looked into his eyes, and he into yours, with an expression which said, more plainly than words, "I understand." To-day there is no response. What has happened? Is this the end? You not only feel an impulse to pray, you do pray!

Face to face with the mystery of life and of death, lonely, conscience-stricken, grateful, ambitious to do something worth while, confronted by the gigantic task of building a better world, what normal man or woman does not feel an impulse to pray?

I

Is prayer one of the highest expressions of the human spirit, or is it one of the most curious superstitions that have ever gripped the mind of man? One's answer to this question will depend upon the view which he has felt obliged to take concerning the nature of ultimate Reality. If he has come to the conclusion that life's final fact is a material fact, that

> ". . . . . the world which seems
> To lie before us like a land of dreams,
> So various, so beautiful, so new,
> Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
> Nor certitude, nor help for pain;
> And we are here as on a darkling plain
> Swept by confused alarms of struggle and flight,
> Where ignorant armies clash by night."

then, of course, he can think of prayer as being at best only a somewhat pathetic superstition. But

if he has come to the conclusion that life's final fact is a spiritual fact, will he not consider that prayer is one of the highest efforts in which the mind of man may employ itself? If there is a God, and if God is all that Jesus put into the word "Father," he must be able to get into "real and effective relations" with his children. And must it not be at once supreme wisdom and supreme joy for his children to get into real and effective relations with him?

It is sometimes urged that there is no place for prayer in a law-abiding world. But the moment you take a good look at this objection, what utter nonsense it proves to be! Do the laws of language interfere with speech? Do the laws of harmony interfere with music? Do the laws of drawing interfere with art, or the laws of mechanics with invention? Was it necessary for Shakespeare to set aside any law in order to write "Hamlet"? Was it necessary for Beethoven to violate any law in order to compose the Ninth Symphony? Was it necessary for Michelangelo to disregard any law in order to paint his marvelous frescoes on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel? Was it necessary for the Wright brothers to repeal any law in order to fly? Literature, music, art, invention—on what does it wait? The ability to disregard law, or the ability to discover law and to act in accordance therewith? And is it not equally true of prayer that its efficacy depends, not upon its ability to set aside law, but precisely upon its ability to think

and will in accordance with law? The prayer of a righteous man availeth much just for the reason that a thoroughly righteous man is apt to understand the laws which operate in a spiritual world. A great artist, by reason of his understanding of the laws of light and color and line and perspective, is able to paint a picture which art lovers for centuries will make pilgrimages to see; a great saint, by reason of his comprehension of the laws of life, is able to offer prayers which influence the course of history.

The objection to prayer, that there is no place for it in a law-abiding world, will be urged to-day only by persons who still suppose that prayer is an attempt to change the will of God. If that were the function of prayer, I, for one, would certainly hope that there was no place for it in any world in which I was obliged to live. The fear lest some well-meaning but misguided saint might prevail upon the Almighty to grant him the desire of his heart, irrespective of the imperative needs of other saints, not to mention sinners like myself, would disturb me day and night. I would not be at all willing that God should intrust the government of the world to praying saints whose intentions might be ever so good, but whose judgment might be ever so faulty.

How utterly absurd this all too persistent notion that prayer is an attempt to bend or alter the will of God! That is the pagan, or perhaps one should say primitive, notion of prayer. At a low level of

human culture, men imagine that they can purchase the favor of the gods by offerings of meat or of incense. If the gods do not respond, it is because they demand more meat, more incense. At another level, somewhat higher, they imagine that they can prevail upon the higher powers if only they cry loud enough and long enough. At still another level, they cling to the belief that a pestilence can be removed, not by better sanitation but by extra litanies, and that war can be averted, not by international justice and good faith, but by a so-called day of prayer. But once men have climbed to a height whence they can see God through the eyes of Jesus, they know perfectly well that God cannot be tricked or cajoled; that he cares nothing for meat offerings or for the odor of incense; that no mere multiplication of litanies will move him; that he will not act in response to the petitions of a pleading but selfish nation.

When one wants to know the Christian conception at any point, it is not a bad practice to turn to Jesus. What was Jesus' conception of prayer? Did he ever attempt, through prayer, to bend or alter the will of God? Consider, in this connection, such sayings as these: "Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify thy name" . . . "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will but as thou wilt." Even in this hour of extreme peril Jesus did not seek to change the will of God;

he sought only to discover it and to obtain strength to do it.

The suggestion has recently been made that the religion of the future will have in it no place for petition, but only for communion and aspiration. I, for my part, cannot subscribe to this suggestion. I do not believe that the religion of the future will exclude those instinctive cries for help which come from human hearts in times of trouble. The noblest Spirit our world has ever known did not hesitate, in his hour of anguish, to plead, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me"; and when I consider how far behind him in spiritual insight and moral achievement the race as a whole even yet is, I can hardly believe that the religion of to-morrow will spurn such a cry. Nor do I believe that it will reject such a plea as, "Forgive us our trespasses," or even such a petition as, "Give us this day our daily bread." But I can and do believe that in years to come intelligent men will look upon prayer, not as a means of altering the will of God, but, rather, as a means of discovering it and preparing themselves to do it.

II

We have, I suspect, devoted entirely too much time to the discussion of such profitless questions as those represented by, Can prayer produce rain? and so diverted attention from a question of such vital importance as this: What part might prayer play in the building on earth of the City of God?

For at least twenty-five centuries men have been dreaming of a better world. In times of terrible discouragement, when the political situation appeared hopelessly dark, the dreamers have felt that their dream could be realized only in heaven, or on an earth that had been miraculously transformed by some dramatic act of intervention on the part of God. But in happier times, and even in times of physical calamity and political disaster, men of unconquerable faith have dared to believe that dreams of a fairer future would some day be realized on earth; and not overnight by divine intervention, but slowly yet certainly as men of good will, in steadily increasing numbers, should learn how to co-operate with God in the accomplishment of a mighty purpose. Even in this present hour of post-war disillusionment, are not thousands of undaunted spirits echoing that noble cry of William Blake, "On, to the City of God"? In relation to this most daring of all adventures, what is the value of prayer?

Prayer, I suggest, *may be the means of developing faith in the possibility of a City of God.*

We must, of course, face facts. If the facts of life drive us into a pessimistic philosophy, into a pessimistic philosophy we must go with whatever of courage we are able to command. But there are, as almost everyone will acknowledge, facts and facts—ugly facts and beautiful facts, cruel facts and kindly facts, base facts and noble facts. The question, then, is not whether we are going to build

our faith without reference to facts; whether, perchance, we are going to cling to the beautiful and comforting fancies of our childhood in spite of facts. The question is, Are we going to think of ultimate Reality in terms of the lowest and worst or in terms of the highest and best? In terms of mud or of mind? Of Judas or of Jesus? And are we going to judge of the final outcome of the human venture by the lust and greed and hate and cruelty which we have witnessed in these recent painful years, or by the fine idealism, the splendid courage, the magnificent unselfishness with which man after man of common clay has faced a grave human crisis? The answer which we give to such questions will depend in large measure upon our own spiritual vitality. If we may be somewhat accurately described by the phrase, "of the earth, earthy," we shall, no doubt, find it easier to think of life's bottom fact in terms of the lowest and worst, and to judge of the probable outcome of the human venture by the ugly impulses which we discover in our own hearts. But if we are spiritually alive, we are apt to place a very different value upon life, and to come to a very different conclusion as to the probable outcome of life.

Now, when men have really prayed—not merely mouthed conventional phrases—they have developed an abounding spiritual vitality, in consequence of which they have not become credulous, but have become daring in both faith and action. Conscious of the reality and glory of a spiritual world, they

have not hesitated to champion unpopular causes, to pit their wits and their will against ignorance, prejudice, inertia, and organized selfishness in gallant attempts to build a better world. Prayer, then, by contributing to the development of spiritual vitality, may prepare the way for faith in the possibility of a City of God.

You cannot have an ideal city without ideal citizens any more than you can have a pleasant smile without a smiling face; which leads me to suggest that *prayer may be the means of overcoming our own evil tendencies and of renewing a right spirit within us.*

There are, to be sure, certain kinds of prayer which have no discernible moral value; the formal, ecclesiastical prayer which one may reel off while thinking of something else; the meaningless, semi-hysterical prayer which one may offer, not for the purpose of gaining spiritual insight or moral courage, but solely for the purpose of enjoying a kind of emotional intoxication; the bitter, revengeful prayer in which one may, with an all too evident relish, rehearse before the Lord the shortcomings of one's neighbors; and many another. Such prayers, far from possessing any moral value, may and often do become morally harmful. But when prayer is sincerely offered in relation to life's real needs, it becomes an unfailing source of moral insight and renewal. When some man who realizes that he is growing petty or selfish, or that he is in danger of becoming a moral coward, or that the beast in

him is threatening to destroy the angel, prays that he may be given strength to fight a good fight and keep the faith, prayer ceases to be a problem and becomes a power.

Tolstoy believed that there was, in every man, "a divine spark, the spirit of God," and that prayer was a means of fanning this spark until it glowed as light and flamed as power. In his later life he prayed every day, and many times during the day. When temptation came, he recalled to mind what had taken place in his soul during those moments of silent prayer, and that which he had seen so clearly then helped to steady him when his vision was in danger of becoming clouded.

Let a man close his eyes, if necessary, in order, as his fathers said, "to shut out the world"—the world in which the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the vainglory of life draw a thick veil between the soul and its eternal home. Then let him try to look at life *sub specie æternitatis.* Will he not discover that he is being judged; that he is, in fact, judging himself, and both approving and condemning? Will he not also discover that in his thinking certain revaluations are beginning to take place? Certain interests which, but a short time ago, looked large, begin now to look small as he views them in the light of life's deepest meaning. The ephemeral popularity which is purchased at the price of disloyalty to what one knows to be true and right—what is this compared with the approval of God and one's own conscience? The

superficial success which means so often that the higher faculties of the soul have atrophied while the mind has devoted itself to but one end, the making of money, and that the heart is restless and unhappy notwithstanding the fact that there is much goods laid up for many years—what is this compared with the durable satisfactions which are born of the love of nature and the love of men? So, through prayer, a man may discover what it is that really matters, deliver his spirit from grossness, and create a place for himself in the City of God.

Again, *prayer may be a means of reminding ourselves that One is our Father, and we all are brethren.*

Before the Great War began, there were in the world several forms of internationalism. There was the internationalism of commerce; the nations of the world exchanged their products. There was the internationalism of music and art and science. Separated by barriers of language, men found themselves strangely united by the bond of music. The language of music all understand. Art also spoke to a great multitude out of every nation and of all tribes and peoples and tongues. And the scientific discoveries of one nation were soon shared by others. Socialism, likewise, was a form of internationalism, as was the foreign-missionary movement sponsored by the churches.

But when the governing classes of Europe let loose the dogs of war, every one of these internationalisms gave way. Blockade and submarine soon put an end to the internationalism of com-

merce. Hate and hysteria destroyed the internationalism of music and art and science. Socialists who had pledged themselves to bring on a general strike, rather than countenance a general war, did not strike in any vigorous or sustained way, but joined the colors. And not a few missionaries on foreign fields who had, until then, labored as comrades, began to look at one another through hostile eyes.

What is now needed is an internationalism that will stand any kind of strain—an internationalism rooted in the Christian conception of God and the Christian conception of man, not weakened by any lingering belief in a tribal deity nor vitiated by race prejudice. Is such an internationalism likely to appear until men learn to *pray*, after the manner of Jesus, "*Our Father*"?

Finally, *prayer may prepare the way for the discovery and acceptance of truth.*

Two great obstacles appear to lie in the path which leads to truth—fear and selfishness. Many people are afraid of truth. They are tormented by the thought that if they knew more they might believe less. To them, truth appears as a thief in the night threatening the loss of their spiritual possessions. And many people willfully blind their eyes to those aspects of truth which challenge the validity of the existing order. To some forms of selfishness we need not, perhaps, plead guilty. But how many of us would be willing to surrender the order by which we profit, or hope some day to profit,

even though it could be shown to us that a very much better order was possible—better, that is to say, for the masses of mankind? In their anxiety to maintain the *status quo* many people have refused to look truth squarely in the face; they have even attempted to keep other people from doing so. From fear, then, and from selfishness must men be delivered if they are ever to know the truth that would set them free from age-old superstitions and oppressions. Could so great a deliverance be secured through prayer? It has been! Men who have practiced the presence of God have been delivered from fear. Men who have learned to look through the eyes of God have been delivered from selfishness.

And now consider: if instead of devoting valuable time to endless discussion as to the possibility of getting "answers" to prayer, men would begin to pray as a means of developing faith in the possibility of a better world, and as a means of preparing themselves to make their own little contribution to the building of that dear City of God which prophetic eyes have seen from afar, would they need any urging to continue the practice of prayer?

III

Every one who does any real thinking has what is termed a world view—a more or less definite conception of the fundamental character of the world in which he lives. The Christian view of the world is that the heart of Reality is revealed in the life and teachings of Jesus; that God is like

Christ. This view has, of course, a very direct bearing upon the whole question of prayer, a bearing which Christians at least formally recognize whenever they conclude a prayer with the words, "In Christ's name we ask it." When I was a child I never omitted these all-important words. Remembering the saying, "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do," I was careful to follow my petition, of whatever character, with the talismanic phrase, "In Christ's name." I actually believed, or at least tried to believe, that if only I concluded my prayer with this magic formula, I would receive what I had asked for. Need I add that after a while my disillusionment was complete? And yet, to-day, I deeply believe that whatever men ask in Christ's name will be done on earth.

But what does it mean to ask in Christ's name? Among us a name is little more than a social convenience. A surname serves to relate us to other members of the same family; a given name serves to distinguish us from other members of the same family. And the two of them coupled together serve to distinguish us from persons both within and without our own family, unless, perchance, our given name happens to be John and our surname Smith; then we are compelled to resort to desperate measures! Speaking generally, we of the West may say with Shakespeare,

> "What's in a name? That which we call a rose
> By any other name would smell as sweet."

But among the ancient Hebrew people there was a vast deal in a name. A name was a kind of tabloid history of the man who bore it. It was supposed to give you some bit of information concerning the circumstances of his birth, or concerning his physical or moral characteristics, or concerning his struggle and achievements. Jacob, for instance, is called Israel, "for thou hast striven with God and with men and hast prevailed"; and Simon, son of John, is called by Jesus, Peter-Rock, in recognition of the change in his character. A man's "name" was almost the equivalent of his "personality." To ask "in Christ's name," is, therefore, to ask in accordance with Christ's character and teachings.

Now, the moment men discover the laws which operate in any given realm, and make requests in accordance with those laws, they get what they ask for. Give us a steam engine, they pray, and their prayer is "answered." Enable us to fly like the birds, they cry, and their cry is heard. Grant us a cure for diphtheria, they plead, so that our children may not die, and their petition is granted. Well, my own belief is that Jesus discovered the laws which operate in the human soul, and in human society, and that if men should begin to ask and act in accordance with the laws which he enunciated, certain very wonderful results would follow. I believe, for one thing, that men themselves would become a great deal more efficient, that they would experience a marked enhancement of personality, that all their latent energies would

begin to assert themselves, and they would be amazed at the amount and kind of work they were able to do. I also believe that, one after another, our present social problems would be solved.

IX

WHAT IS MAN?

"When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers,
The moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained,
What is man that thou art mindful of him?
And the son of man, that thou visitest him?"

This question was put about 2,500 years ago by a lonely watcher who felt the awful contrast between the vastness of the heavens and the smallness of a human figure, standing in a sheep pasture, on a starlit night.

On a clear night in that Syrian country, 2,500 years ago, an observant shepherd might have counted as many as 6,000 stars. What if some one had told him that the stellar universe contains between two and three million stars? What if some one had told him that the sun is nearly 93,000,000 miles from the earth? And that the more distant stars in the milky way are a hundred thousand trillion miles away from the sun? What if some one had told him that a ray of light, traveling 186,000 miles a second, would take 50,000 years to pass from one end of the universe to the other? And then, what if someone had suggested to him that out beyond this vast collection of stars, which we call our universe, there may be yet other universes, and that these other universes, together

with our own, constitute *the* universe? With how much greater wonder would he have exclaimed,

"When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers,
The moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained,
What is man that thou art mindful of him?"

Would he, perhaps, have cried out with a modern psalmist?—

"He that has lived for the lust of the minute
And died with the doing of it, flesh without mind,
He that has nailed all flesh to the cross,
Till Self died out in the love of his kind;

. . . . . .

"Stately purposes, valor in battle, glowing annals of army and fleet,
Death for the right cause, death for the wrong cause, trumpets of victory, groans of defeat;

. . . . . .

"Raving politics never at rest—as this poor earth's pale history runs—
What is it all but the trouble of ants in the gleam of a million million suns?"

I

Yet neither the ancient nor the modern psalmist stops short with a despairing question. Neither of them permits himself to be overwhelmed by the sheer immensity of the starry spaces. The first answers:

"Thou hast made him but little lower than God,
And crownest him with glory and honor.
Thou makest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands;
Thou hast put all things under his feet."

The second answers:

"Peace, let it be! for I loved him, and love him forever;
the dead are not dead but alive."

The ancient psalmist discovers the greatness of man in those intellectual powers which have given him dominion over the lower orders of life. The modern psalmist discovers the greatness of man in those spiritual powers which—so at least his noblest faith affirms—enable him to pass triumphant through the experience of death. In the thought of the one, the glory revealed in the heavens is, after all, hardly to be compared with the glory revealed in the mind of man. In the thought of the other, the marvel of a million million suns is incomparably less than the marvel of a human spirit that has nailed all self to the cross till self dies out in the love of his kind.

Which would you say is the more wonderful: those two, perhaps three, billion shining worlds which constitute the stellar universe, or that awe-inspired shepherd who wrote the eighth psalm? The great globes shine, but they do not know that they shine.

"In reason's ear, they all rejoice,
And utter forth a glorious voice,
Forever singing as they shine,
'The hand that made us is divine.' "

Yes, in reason's ear, but only in reason's ear. Earth does not call out to Mars, or Mars to Saturn, or Saturn to Jupiter, or Jupiter to Venus, or Venus to Mercury, "The hand that made us is divine."

It is only by reason's ear, by the mind and heart of man, that any celestial anthem is ever heard. Which, then, is the more wonderful: those shining worlds, which do not know that they shine; those awe-inspiring systems, which do not know that they are systems; or that Judæan shepherd, who, in the presence of the heavenly glory, exclaims:

> "O Jehovah, our Lord,
> How excellent is thy name in all the earth."

Physically speaking, a man is, of course, insignificant. Compare him not with the sun, whose mass is three hundred and thirty-two thousand, four hundred and thirty-two times that of the earth; compare him with any mountain which arises thousands of feet into the rarefied air. How small he appears when you place him at the foot of Mount Blanc! How physically insignificant! A mere mite! Yes, but

> "A man went down to Panama
> Where many a man had died,
> To slit the sliding mountains,
> And lift the eternal tide.
> A man stood up in Panama,
> And the mountains stood aside!"

Said the squirrel to the mountain, in Emerson's famous parable, "If I cannot carry huge bowlders on my back, neither can you crack a nut." And what may not a man say to a mountain? "I am not," he may say, "as big as you, not one-thousandth-millionth part as big as you, but I am so much greater than you that if only I have faith

as a grain of mustard-seed, I may say to you, 'Remove hence, to yonder place,' and you shall remove."

Just after the sinking of the Titanic, the Brooklyn Eagle published a striking cartoon. Overhead, a vast, dark, threatening sky. In the background, an iceberg, huge, towering, ghastly white. In the foreground, a gigantic wave on the point of breaking. Beneath it, a human being clinging with one hand to a bit of wreckage, and lifting the other in instinctive but pitifully unavailing protest toward the toppling wall of water that is about to destroy him. The cartoon was entitled "Man."

When you first looked at it, it appeared almost dreadfully convincing. In the presence of the awful forces of nature, and the vast immensities of sea and sky, what is man? How small! How weak! How helpless! But the more you looked at this striking cartoon, the less convincing it became. You began to realize that it did not tell the whole story. It presented man at only one tragic moment in his brilliant career; it had nothing to say about the thousand and one ways in which man has harnessed great natural forces and compelled them to serve him. And you suddenly remembered that even at that seemingly tragic moment, it was not nature but man that had triumphed. When William T. Stead, for instance, stood on the deck of that sinking ship, and, conscious though he was of superior powers, gave his place in the lifeboat to an unknown woman of the

steerage, choosing to die in order that chivalry might live, he was so much greater than the mere physical immensities about him that were God to be unmindful of him, God himself would be small.

We, ourselves, value spiritual greatness more than we do mere physical bigness. We place a man like David Livingstone over against a mountain and say that this man is of more worth than that mountain. We increase the size of the mountain until it assumes the bulk of a planet, and still affirm that this man is of more worth than that planet. We multiply the planet by a thousand, a million, a billion, three billion, and still affirm that this man who, giving his life for Africa, can write, "All I can say in my loneliness is, May God's richest blessing come down upon any man, American, English, Turk, who will heal this open sore of the world"—that this man is of more worth than all the mindless, characterless worlds that rush through the infinite spaces. "He is worth more to us," we say; and then we dare to believe that he is worth more to God. Are we justified in leaping to this conclusion? Well, if any one should put that question to me, I could only declare with Whittier my own belief that

> "The riddle of the universe is understood
> Only by him who feels that God is good;
> As only he can feel who makes his love
> The ladder of his faith, and climbs above
> On the rounds of his best instincts; draws no line
> Between mere human goodness and divine,
> But, judging God by what in him is best,
> With a child's trust leans on a Father's breast."

II

"What is man that thou art mindful of him,
And the son of man that thou visitest him?"

We have been thinking of man in relation to the heavens. Let us consider him, also, in relation to the earth, and see whether, from the point of view of the evolutionist, we can still answer,

"Thou hast made him but little lower than God,
And crownest him with glory and honor."

On the theory of evolution, man was not, of course, created in a single day about six thousand years ago. Archæologists have dug up the remains of a splendid race of men who lived between twenty-five thousand and thirty thousand years ago. They have dug up the remains of a man described as "a clumsy, shuffling, loose-jointed being of great muscular power," who probably spoke but little, but who used fire, fashioned flints, and reverently laid his dead away two hundred and fifty thousand years ago. They have dug up the remains of a creature who stood erect, and who was almost, though not quite, human, and who is thought to have lived fully five hundred thousand years ago. Just what sort of a tentative man appeared before him we do not know. But we have abundant reason to believe that man was not created outright; that he emerged from lower forms of life; that he has not descended from any living ape, but has descended from some as yet undiscovered creature from which, one or two million years ago, the greater apes also descended.

But now, having said this, let us remind ourselves that "we must not cease to believe that God did anything because we have found out the way in which he did it." We know to-day at least a little more than our fathers knew about the way in which man became a living soul. But nothing that we now know, or are ever likely to know, need dim the glory of our fathers' faith that it was God who made man.

"A fire-mist and a planet,
A crystal and a cell,
A jelly fish and a saurian,
And caves where cavemen dwell;
Then a sense of law and beauty,
And a face turned from the clod—
Some call it evolution,
And others call it God."

The only fault that may be found with this noble and illuminating bit of poetry is its suggestion that *some* call it evolution, and *others* call it God; whereas the fact of the matter is that *the great majority of evolutionists themselves call it God.* Down through the whole process, from the fire-mist to the planet, from the planet to the cell, from the cell to the jelly fish and the saurian and the caves where cavemen dwell; from the first tentative apes to the first tentative men, down through the whole process until the very hour when there was a sense of law and beauty, and a human face turned from the clod, they see the working of a divine Intelligence. And they call that intelligence God.

But did God make man in his own image? Is there anything divine in this human face which, at long last, is turned from the clod?

Just at this point we need to guard ourselves against the silly mistake of judging the fruit of the tree by the root of the tree. Some one advances the theory that the idea of immortality was born of dreams in which the dreamer wandered far afield from the place where his body lay, and so conceived the idea that there is a kind of happy hunting ground to which the spirit goes after death. Now I, for my part, do not know whether the idea of immortality originated in this fashion. But suppose it did. Ought I to conclude that because it did, I, to-day, can no longer entertain it—overlooking the fact that modern belief in immortality rests on far different grounds? However the thought of life after death came into the world, it has managed to remain in the world. It has managed to justify itself to some of the greatest minds of the race. It has proved an ever fruitful source of inspiration for noble living. And it is written, "By their fruits [not by their roots] ye shall know them." Not by the way an idea comes into the world, but by the way in which it works in the world, must its validity and nobility be judged.

So, also, in the case of man himself. Someone advances the theory that man has emerged from lower forms of life. Darwin declared that he bears about in his body the stigmata of his lowly origin. Walt Whitman declared that he is "stuccoed all

over with quadrupeds." Someone else has called attention to the presence, in modern man, of more than fifty bodily relics which are of no conceivable use to him in his present state, but which were of use to him at various stages of his upward climb—the vermiform appendix, for instance, and the muscles with which some of us are able to move our ears! But when you have acknowledged that man has a lowly origin, must you come to the conclusion that he is altogether of the earth, earthy? How can you come to that conclusion in the presence of the prophets and poets and saints and seers of the centuries? When a man like Phillips Brooks appears, whatever may lie back of him in a past unimaginably remote, you know that he bears, in his spirit, the image of God.

III

Now there are, of course, a great many ways of distinguishing this wonderful creature who bears in his body the stigmata of a lowly origin, but bears in his spirit the image of God. In a fascinating essay on "Faces," John Brierly distinguishes man as the animal who laughs. "There is no other creature," he reminds us, "who knows how to do it;" and adds, "When you hear children laugh, still more when you hear a man laugh, you are listening to the best music the world offers." Then, from the laughter of man, he leaps to the love of God: "The God who makes laughter is a good and a loving God. Laughter would never have been heard on earth

had it not been first heard in heaven. To hear it is to be assured that we are in a good, honest world." But let us now distinguish man in four significant ways.

Man is the animal who thinks, "I am." A dog can do many things which a man does. He can growl a little! He can observe, remember, and act with some degree of intelligence. A friend of mine once remarked concerning his dog that the animal was so intelligent it was positively embarrassing to have him around. But was there ever a dog who learned the use of "I" and "me," and reflected,

> ". . . I am not what I see,
> And other than the things I touch"?

Was there ever a dog who made himself the object of his own thought; who held himself, as it were, at arm's length and examined himself? Man alone is the animal who rises to the plane of self-consciousness and thinks, "I am."

And man alone is the animal who ever thinks, "I ought."

"The more I see of men," growled a cynic, "the more I think of dogs." Well, one feels sorry for this cynic. Life must have dealt him some pretty rotten deals. Or was it, perhaps, he himself who dealt some pretty rotten deals? Men who are themselves honest believe in honesty. It is only the crook who insists that everybody is crooked. Men who are themselves clean believe in cleanness. It is only the moral leper who insists that everybody is spotted. I very much doubt that any man who

has achieved nobility in his own life would say that the more he sees of men the more he thinks of dogs.

But be this as it may, the fact remains that no dog, however wonderful, ever stood in the presence of any kind of situation and thought, "I really ought to do thus and so." No, it is man alone who is ever swayed by an ideal. And in man's case, the urge of an ideal may become even more imperious than the urge of hunger or the urge of sex. Think of the men who have denied themselves food and drink in order that they might concentrate their attention upon some baffling question of duty. Think of the men who have become eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake; who have denied themselves wife and child and cheering fireside in order that they might devote themselves with greater abandon to some noble cause.

To realize the power of an ideal over the lives of generation after generation of the sons of men, one needs only to consider how differently history would read if no man had ever thought, or acted upon the thought, "I ought." Suppose that through all the centuries men had responded only to such primitive urges as hunger and sex. There would have been no Hebrew prophets, no Christian martyrs, no sixteenth-century reformers, no eighteenth-century evangelists, no nineteenth-century emancipators, and no twentieth-century idealists demanding the outlawing of war and the securing of universal peace. But in generation after generation, men have

said to themselves, "There is a better than we have become; there is a higher than we have attained; there is a nobler than we have achieved; we ought not, therefore, to remain where we are; we ought to be moving up and on!"

And man alone is the animal who ever says to himself, "I can."

It has been argued by necessitarians that man has no real freedom inasmuch as the strongest motive always prevails. Do they mean by this that the motive that prevails is the strongest motive? If they do, we need not bother to argue with them, for they are merely begging the question. But if when they say that the strongest motive always prevails they mean the motive that primitive passions are backing, we may and should take issue with them. For again and again primitive passion has suggested one thing, and some man, in control of his passions, has decided to do an exactly opposite thing. When passion has suggested license, he has cried out with Joseph in the house of Potiphar, "How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?" When passion has suggested revenge, he has replied with Edith Cavell, "Patriotism is not enough; there must be no hatred or bitterness toward any one." When passion, the natural, physical craving for continued existence, has urged, Live! Live! he has chosen with William T. Stead to die in order that certain hard-won spiritual values may never cease to be.

For animals lower than man, the range of choice

becomes more and more limited until, in the case of a star-fish, for example, you can predict with certainty the precise response that will follow a given stimulus. But in the case of man, how truly marvelous the range of choice! A man cannot, to be sure, act with utter independence of all the factors in his own nature and in his social environment. There is no such thing, even in man's case, as an unlimited freedom. But the man who says, I ought, may also say, God helping me, I can!

And man alone is the animal who ever decided, "I will." I am—this. I ought to be—that. What I ought to be, I can become. And now, God helping me, I will become the man I ought to be.

There are, to be sure, a great many Hamlets among us who must shamefacedly confess, "I do not know why yet I live to say, this thing's to do, since I have cause and will and strength and means to do it." But not all men are Hamlets. History records the names of how many gallant spirits who, in the face of terrific odds, have said not only "I ought," not only "I can," but "I will,"—and then acted! And when some man, sweating as it were great drops of blood, prays, "If it is possible, let this cup pass away from me; nevertheless, not my will but thine be done;" when some man rises in the grandeur of a mighty moral purpose and identifies his own will with the will of God, then you know that there is divinity in humanity.

And so, from the point of view of the evolutionist, in reply to the question,

"What is man that thou art mindful of him.
And the son of man that thou visitest him?"

we may still answer,

"Thou hast made him but little lower than God,
And crownest him with glory and honor."

Ask any evolutionist, What of man's origin? and he will reply that man's origin was lowly enough. Ask the great majority of evolutionists, What of man's destiny? and they will reply, "Now is he a son of God, and it does not yet appear what he shall be, but there is at least a reasonable hope that some day he will become one with the Eternal Father of his spirit."

X

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A CHRISTIAN?

It has occurred to me that on this first Sunday morning of the new year, it might be profitable for us to lift into our minds this question: What does it mean to be a Christian? Who has a right to call himself a Christian? Have you? Have I? It is a rather dreadful question, is it not? Most of us, I suspect, have come to the conclusion that Christendom is not Christian. Many of us would hesitate to affirm that the United States, or, indeed, any nation, is a Christian nation. Some of us would even feel constrained to say that organized Christianity falls short of being Christian—that there is no church which is wholly Christian. And how many of us would venture to claim that we, ourselves, are wholly Christian? The fact of the matter is that at this point our generation is far more humble than its predecessors have been. We may not feel obliged to say with Nietzsche that there has been only one Christian, and he died upon the cross. But, surely, we are not as ready as our fathers were to apply the word "Christian" to ourselves, or to our world; partly, no doubt, because we are not so sure as they were that we know what it means to be a Christian, and partly, also, because we are beginning to sense, as they did not, the awful contrast between Jesus' way of life and our own.

I

There are, I take it, certain negative conclusions to which nearly all of us have come. One is that Christianity and church membership are not identical terms. Not long ago I picked up a volume bearing the somewhat provocative title, *Shall We Stand By the Church?* In it I found a chapter captioned, "Christianizing Church Members." Undoubtedly, the thing needs to be done. It does not follow that church members are all hypocrites, or that even a considerable portion of them are. The older I grow, the more loath I am to assume that anybody is a conscious hypocrite. Occasionally I meet not only laymen but clergymen who seem to be following Christ afar off; some through lack of vision, others through lack of courage, or by reason of some other human weakness. But seldom, if ever, do I meet a churchman concerning whom I would feel free to say, or even to think, that he is deliberately pretending to be what he is not.

The flaws and inconsistencies of human nature are, perhaps, more evident in the case of churchmen than they are in the case of persons who, as they say, make no profession of religion, for the reason that churchmen are inevitably judged by the severe standards of Christ; just as the faults of all institutionalism are more vividly illustrated in the church than in most other human institutions, because the ideal espoused by the church is more lofty than the ideal espoused, say, by a political

party, or a labor union, or a chamber of commerce. In the case of the church the contrast between ideal and reality, aspiration and achievement, is inevitably greater than it is in the case of any other human institution. But of conscious hypocrisy in the church there is, I am convinced, far less than critical outsiders are apt to imagine. What needs to be admitted is just the fact, already referred to, that membership in the church no more makes a man a Christian than membership in a college makes him a scholar.

Nor are many of us likely to suppose that Christianity is identical with any particular kind of emotional experience. To call to mind certain great and comforting passages of Scripture, to join in the singing of great Christian hymns, to listen to an earnest and eloquent evangelist, to participate in a testimony meeting where the atmosphere is charged with emotional power—this brings to many persons an agreeable sense of relief from the burdens and blunders of life. But if it leads to no high resolve, no earnest commitment to the principles of Christ, it possesses no more Christian significance than does the momentary emotional transcendence which many another person experiences while reading an absorbing novel or watching an exciting play.

Nor are many of us likely to suppose that Christianity is identical with any kind of intellectual orthodoxy, or, for that matter, with any kind of intellectual heresy.

When the frightened warden of the Philippian prison cried out, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" Paul and Silas answered, "Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved, thou and thy house." Well, in those first anxious years of the new faith, to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ involved a very real and daring kind of personal adventure. We are told that the grateful warden did believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and that during that strange, wild night he and all his family were baptized. What happened to him afterward is not reported, but it is at least conceivable that he lost his job, if not his head. For this man, the decision to believe on Jesus involved a sharp and heroic break with the past, a reorganization of ideas and ideals, a new kind of life. But as Christianity moved westward, it came under the influence of Greek philosophy, and in the attempt to adjust itself to Greek civilization, it underwent a serious change. A day came when belief on the Lord Jesus Christ was understood to mean something very different from what it had meant to Paul and Silas and the Philippian jailer. It merely meant the acceptance of certain speculative opinions concerning the relationship between the Jesus of history and deity. And this shift of emphasis from a moral demand to an intellectual demand, this reinterpretation of Christianity, not as a way of life, but as a body of belief, was surely one of the supreme mistakes of history.

One of the results of this mistake has been that

the name of Christian has been refused to good men and applied to bad men. It has been refused to men who possessed in a truly remarkable degree the spirit of Christ, but who could not accept certain theological dogmas, and applied to men who did not possess in any notable degree the spirit of Christ, but who could and did subscribe to the official creeds of the church. Professor Kirsopp Lake has suggested that when the men of the nineteenth century shall stand before the judgment bar of history, two classes will be especially prominent: "the men of science who, very often with great cost to themselves, have extended the boundaries of human knowledge, and have sometimes rejected the name of Christian because they were unable to accept the theology of the church, and the men who have guided the national and international policies of Europe, most of whom have accepted the Christian name, but whose conduct has been a cynical denial of Christian ethics."

Our present dissatisfaction with creeds is due in part to this amazing fact that a creedal emphasis has plunged us into ethical absurdities, led us to denounce men who were serving the common good, and to approve men who were conspiring against the welfare of mankind. But it is due, also, to the further fact that Christianity is a way of life, and you simply cannot put it into a theological museum and expect it to stay there. No generation is able to say, "This is what Christianity means, all that it means, all that it will ever mean."

Our present dissatisfaction with the historic creeds of Christendom lies, not so much in what they say, as in what they leave unsaid. Some of us would like to rise up on Sunday morning and say: "I believe in the brotherhood of man. I believe in the possibility of a Christian fellowship which shall raze all barriers of race and nation and color and class and unite the peoples of earth by bonds so strong that not even the dogs of war could rend them." With what profound conviction, and yes, soul-stirring emotion, many of us could stand in our several places and say: "I believe in the possibility of world-wide peace. I believe in the possibility of a kingdom of God." The historic creeds of Christendom leave unexpressed some of the deepest convictions of modern minds; just as many of the hymns of the church fail to voice some of the deepest longings of modern hearts. Christianity means more to-day than it did when the creeds were formed and the hymns were written.

There is, then, an inherent weakness in any attempt to identify Christianity with any creedal statement of it. To identify Christianity with the orthodoxies of yesterday would be to lose some of its most significant meanings for to-day, and to identify it with the heresies of to-day would be to take no account of some of the most significant meanings which it may have to-morrow.

In recent years Christianity has been identified with the spirit of Christ. Some have said, "If only a man pays his debts, if only he is honest and clean

and kind and unselfish, if only he rises above the low level of petty concern for his own interest, and behaves in any broadminded, large-hearted way; if, in a word, he possesses what is generally recognized as the spirit of Christ, he is a Christian." Well, to call any man a Christian who has not the spirit of Christ would be tantamount to saying that black is white, that disease is health, that nothing is something. But will it do to identify Christianity solely with the spirit of Christ?

The present tendency to do so is due in part to sheer revolt from the notion that Christianity means nothing more than intellectual subscription to historic creeds and catechisms, but also, I suspect, to our present intellectual confusion. There are, as you know, many persons to-day who, if the question were put to them, "Do you believe in God?" would feel obliged to answer, "Yes—no—sometimes." They do not know whether they can believe in God. They do believe in Jesus. They feel very sure that the world as a whole, and everybody in it, would be vastly better off if only Christ's spirit should take possession of human hearts. And in their wretched uncertainty about God, they experience at least a momentary relief in their absolute certainty about Jesus—the reliability of his ethical teaching, the glory of his spirit. "So," they say, "let us stop wrestling with ultimate questions, and address ourselves to this immediate, practical question, How to make the spirit of Christ prevail in the world."

But it is, I should say, extremely doubtful whether we shall ever be able to make the spirit of Christ prevail in the world unless we are supported and inspired by the faith of Christ as to what lies at the heart of the world. Let us suppose for a moment that the universe at bottom is neither moral nor immoral, but unmoral; that it is quite indifferent to moral considerations. Will moral idealism come out of any such belief as that? Anti-slavery movements, temperance crusades, efforts to secure permanent and universal peace? If a man really believes that the universe itself doesn't care a fig for moral endeavor, how much heart will he have for any moral crusade? Can you imagine men marching to the sort of music that would express the dark and dismal negations of old Omar Khayyám? Suppose, on the other hand, that the universe at heart is moral, that there is a moral order which is the source and secret of man's own dream of justice and brotherhood and peace, that the universe will lend itself to the realization of ideal values, that every valiant crusader for a fairer future may carry on in the assurance that "the ultimate forces of the universe are at his back." Will moral idealism come out of that kind of faith? It has.

The fact of the matter is that Christian idealism is so deeply rooted in Christian faith that if Christian faith should be destroyed, it is extremely doubtful whether Christian idealism would long survive. Must we not say, then, that Christianity is something more than the spirit of Christ; that

it is the spirit of Christ supported and inspired by the faith of Christ in the greatness and goodness of God?

II

And now, more positively and definitely, let us consider that question which we lifted into our minds a moment ago, What does it mean to be a Christian? As I have already intimated, no exhaustive answer to this question is or ever will be possible, seeing that Christianity is a way of life and no one, at any given historic moment, can certainly say to what heights of vision and practical endeavor the way will lead. But there are, I believe, at least a few suggestions which one may venture to offer.

To be a Christian means to share with Jesus his faith in God. Unquestionably, to-day, the masses of mankind want peace. They are almost literally sick of war; sick of seeing their fields trampled, their homes destroyed, their daughters ravished, their sons slain. But will a permanent world-wide peace ever appear on this "wandering island in the sky"? In the presence of such a question, how keenly one feels the need of Jesus' faith in God. At this present moment what courage would come to us if only we could really believe that the universe is on the side of that Hebrew prophet who dared to affirm that the nations of the world will one day beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks, and learn war no more; that the stars in their courses are fighting

against militarism and selfish imperialism; that God Almighty has decreed that the mailed fists of the lords of war shall give way to the open palm of the Prince of Peace! Fortified with that conviction, we could go out and create the conditions out of which peace would come.

There are, likewise, how many personal, private situations in which Jesus' faith in God would make all the difference between hope and despair. In his *Life of General Booth*, Railton tells of the day when Mrs. Booth was informed by her physician, Sir James Paget, that she was doomed to die from cancer; how she came home, and, even through her tears, tried to smile upon the dear old general as she gradually unfolded to him the result of the interview; and how these two devoted spirits, who had lived together for nearly forty years, faced the inevitable event, not without sadness, but entirely without fear or despair, because they believed in God.

In the final analysis, a man's faith in God represents a great and daring personal venture. The historic arguments for the existence of God possess even yet a very considerable degree of potency; but they are far from being coercive. They help belief; they do not compel it. No, faith in God is, and must ever be, a personal venture, a brave resolution, as Frederick Meyers put it, "to stand or fall by the noblest hypothesis." And being a Christian surely means this, that a man shall dare to make with Jesus this great assumption of the

spiritual meaning and purpose of life, and on this assumption to build his own life.

Might one not also venture to suggest that to be a Christian means to share with Jesus his faith in man, and to take toward all men the attitude which Jesus took?

In his volume of *Reminiscences*, Lyman Abbott tells of the way in which the home of Governor Claflin, of Massachusetts, used to be open to all sorts and conditions of people. One might meet there such celebrities as Henry Ward Beecher, and John B. Gough, and John Greenleaf Whittier, and Charles Dudley Warner, and Sarah Orne Jewett, and Harriet Beecher Stowe. One might also meet there certain shabbily clad residents of Boston's slums. Doctor Abbott says that on one occasion, when a house party was being given to needy mothers and their children, one of the guests, a poor, gaunt woman, said to Mrs. Claflin: "What made you think of doing this? Jesus Christ told you to do it, didn't he?"

"Yes," answered her smiling hostess, "I guess he did."

"I thought so," was the reply. "I knew you couldn't have thought of it yourself."

It was Jesus Christ who advised: "When you give a dinner or supper, do not ask your friends, or your brothers or your relatives, or your rich neighbors, in case they invite you back again, and you get repaid. No, when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the maimed, the lame, and the

blind." Do you and I act upon that principle in the planning of our social life?

Jesus valued human beings, not only for what they were, but for what they might become. There was Simon, son of John, whose hands smelled of fish. There was Matthew, the tax collector, whose neighbors cordially hated him. There was Mary Magdalene, who had loved, but not wisely—representative of thousands of ignorant, heart-hungry women who have been scorned by a society which says that a man who side-steps into sin may be pardoned, but a woman, never. How much chance for self-development did Simon, son of John, have, or Matthew, or Mary Magdalene, in that civilization into which they were born? But Jesus saw something of great value in these social pariahs, and under the touch of his creative faith they developed personalities of such vitality that they have lived in the history of nineteen hundred years. Have you and I formed the habit of seeing people, not merely in terms of what they now are, but in terms of what they may become?

"How much," asked Jesus, "is a man of more value than a sheep?" and left no doubt as to his own answer. What is our answer to that question? Do we agree with him that a man is of more value than a sheep, that every industrial plant in America ought to be operated primarily with a view to the welfare of those who work in it, and not primarily with a view to the material gain of those who have invested in it?

In the first sermon that Jesus preached in his home town, he called attention to the fact that, once upon a time, God had shown a very lively interest in a Sidonian widow and in a Syrian leper.[1] That was not only the first, but the last sermon that Jesus preached in his home town. It so angered his fellow townsmen that they attempted to lynch him. They did not want to believe that God was interested in persons belonging to a different race. Do we believe that God is interested in Hungarians, in Italians, in Chinese, and Negroes, and that we ourselves ought to be? During the Interdenominational Student Conference held in Evanston a short time ago a group of white students invited a Negro student to lunch with them. They all went together to an Evanston restaurant, but were courteously informed by the proprietor that, although he had no personal objections to letting a Negro eat in his establishment, so many of his patrons would object that he could not afford to let it be done. What shall be said of the attitude which an episode of this sort reveals? Is it Christian? Do persons who take that attitude have any right to call themselves Christian?

At this point, suggestions come thick and fast. What does it mean to be a Christian? Does it not mean to go into life as Jesus did, not to be ministered unto, but to minister; not to get all you can, but to give all you can? Yes, and does it not mean to forgive as Jesus forgave; to conquer, not by brute force, but by what Mahatma Gandhi has

so aptly called soul force? Why is it that to-day the name of Jesus is above every name? Is not one answer given in the confession attributed to Napoleon on Saint Helena?—"Alexander, Cæsar, Charlemagne, and myself founded great empires; but upon what did the creations of our genius depend? Upon force. Jesus alone founded his empire upon love, and to this very day millions would die for him." "The captains and the kings depart." Edith Cavell remains as a healing memory and inspiration. "The tumult and the shouting dies." Still stands Abraham Lincoln, with his malice toward none, his charity for all. The mob that stood about the cross on a green hill far away; the chief priests who taunted and jeered; the soldiers who diced in the hour of a supreme tragedy—all these are gone. Of no single one of them do we so much as know the name. But the despised and rejected Idealist who died that day has become the hope of the nations!

But now, finally, let me venture to suggest that to be a Christian is to share with Jesus his expectation of a better world, and his utter devotion to its coming. In polite society once more it is considered proper, or at least not improper, to talk about religion. But in many cases the kind of religion which one is at liberty to talk about, and even to urge upon one's friends, is the kind which may be counted upon to protect investments, prevent social unrest, and keep things as they are. This kind of religion is, of course, not Christianity.

The religion of Jesus has never undertaken to keep things as they are. "If we let him alone," said Caiaphas, "all men will believe on him, and the Romans will come and take away our nation and our place." When Saint Paul came to Thessalonica, Jewish conservatives exclaimed in dismay, "These that have turned the world upside down have come hither also."

We cannot too often remind ourselves that Christianity began as a revolutionary movement. Jesus himself realized that men could no more accept his teachings and still cling to certain of their former beliefs and practices than a wine merchant could pour new wine into old wine skins without causing the old wine skins to burst. Nor can we too often remind ourselves that essential Christianity will continue to be a revolutionary movement until the will of God is done on earth as it is done in heaven. Institutionalized Christianity will strive, like other vested interests, to maintain the order of which it is a part, but the spirit of Christ will strive to upset any order which does not embody the will of God. The religion of Jesus is not a religion for comfortable, complacent, middle-aged persons who have had their fling, and made their pile, and are ready now to settle down. It is a religion for those who keep their spirits young. To live in the present, inspired by the heroic past, and not content with any present achievement, to struggle unceasingly for a nobler future—is not this, also, involved in being a Christian?

STUDIES IN LIFE

XI

THE WILL TO BELIEVE

One of our contemporaries[1] has recently tried to tell us why he is an unbeliever. There is, he says, no moral obligation to believe what is unbelievable, any more than there is a moral obligation to do what is undoable. Faith, he appears to think, is an unenviable ability to overpower reason in the interest of the emotions and put doubt to sleep. It is possessed by credulous persons who are incapable of weighing evidence, by timid persons who are afraid to face facts, and by dishonest persons who, for reasons of expediency, are willing to say they believe what they do not. He has, of course, wholly and tragically misconceived the meaning of faith. But has he not done so, in part at least, because institutional Christianity has itself misconceived it, has once and again identified faith with intellectual conformity in the name of ecclesiastical statistics rather than with spiritual adventure in the name of a better world?

I

This historic demand for intellectual assent to dogmas has made it appear that faith is essentially an affair of the mind.

Faith does have, unquestionably, an intellectual aspect. The demand for faith arises from a situa-

[1] Carl Van Doren, *The Forum*, December, 1926, p. 864.

tion in which it is possible for a man to doubt. Where doubt is impossible, faith is unnecessary. I cannot doubt that two plus two equals four, or that things which are equal to the same thing are equal to each other. In cases of this sort faith is uncalled for; the mere statement of the proposition compels belief. I can doubt that it is worth while to go to college, or that the Sermon on the Mount contains a workable ethic, or that there is a living God of whom Jesus Christ is the spiritual portrait, or that human personality survives the shock of death. In cases of this sort, faith is called for; the mere statement of the proposition does not compel belief. And when a man finds himself in a situation where doubt is possible, but action along some line is necessary, he ought certainly to use his head. He ought to make what appears to be the more reasonable choice. And to say this is, of course, to acknowledge that faith does have an intellectual aspect.

But is faith essentially an affair of the mind?

It will, I think, be generally conceded that Jesus was a man of faith. Was faith in Jesus merely an affair of the mind, a bare intellectual conviction? Mr. J. Middleton Murry, in the preface to his recently published book, *Jesus, Man of Genius*, says of him that Jesus "was more than the teacher of an ultimate wisdom . . . [he] was a teacher who died to save men who would not listen to his teaching." In Jesus, that is to say, you find something more than bare intellectual conviction. You find

conviction plus the courage to act in the line of that conviction regardless of immediate consequences. And is not that the combination which you find in every man who may properly be described as a man of faith?

Conviction alone, minus the courage to act, spells not faith, but cowardice.

Faith springs from man's need, not merely to think something, but to do something, in situations where it is possible for him to doubt. It is essentially not an intellectual attitude, but a volitional attitude, in which the whole man, with his eyes wide open to the risk involved, but fully persuaded of the worth of the adventure, determines to stake everything on the possibility of success. Faith is Jesus convinced that love is the mightiest power in the world—and laying down his life for his friends. Faith is Columbus convinced that the earth is round—and sailing on. Faith is Pasteur convinced that it lies within the power of man to rid himself of parasitical diseases—and applying his vaccines, first to animals and then to men. Faith is Woodrow Wilson convinced that it is possible to maintain the peace of the world by continuous conference and readjustment—and staking his place in history on the creation of a league of nations.

II

The volitional aspect of faith is suggested by the title which William James gave to one of his most famous essays—"The Will to Believe." It is easy

to caricature and condemn the notion that a man should ever "will to believe." Almost anybody can think of situations in which the will to believe would represent an unheroic, if not a positively immoral, procedure. A man might will to believe in the absence of evidence. He might even will to believe in spite of evidence. And it ought, I suppose, to go without saying that a man should be prepared to surrender any belief, however comforting and inspiring it may have been to him, the moment he discovers that well-attested facts do not support it. Not to do so is not merely to live in a paradise of fools; it is to incur the guilt of intellectual dishonesty, of moral cowardice, and of that disloyalty to truth which, if universally indulged in, would presently extinguish the light of heaven and leave the race in total darkness.

There are, however, cases where the evidence as yet available constitutes neither positive proof nor positive disproof. And so long as there is still room for debate, what ought a man to do? Should he will to believe, or should he will not to believe, or should he will neither to believe nor to disbelieve, but to wait until the evidence becomes compelling on one side or the other?

It depends, no doubt, upon what is involved. Here, for instance, is Einstein's theory of relativity, which is still being keenly debated by persons who have the hardihood to suppose that they understand it. And I do not hesitate to say that for the present I, for one, intend to remain calmly agnostic

with respect to it. I intend neither to believe it nor to disbelieve it, until some agreement has been reached at least by those clever individuals who are said to be capable of handling the mathematics involved in it. In a case of this sort no great personal or social good is immediately at stake. Nothing would be lost by waiting for undeniable proof.

Consider, however, another kind of option. Is it better to be generous than selfish? Is it possible to overcome evil with good? Is there a God who is Christlike? None of these questions is undebatable. If it *is* better to be generous than selfish, then it must be better to operate an industry with a view to public service rather than with a view solely to private profit. But, surely, one may risk the observation that not everyone believes that it is. The few attempts along this line that have actually been made seem to demonstrate the practicality of a type of industry that is unashamed and unafraid of moral idealism. But such attempts have not as yet become sufficiently numerous to compel conviction, so that it is still possible to doubt that it is better, in the industrial world, to be generous than selfish.

If it *is* possible to overcome evil with good, then vengeance, even when it poses as outraged justice, would appear to be an unnecessary form of social restraint. If it is possible to convert a criminal into a useful citizen by treating him kindly during his imprisonment, what justification is there for treating him brutally? If it is possible to overcome

the intolerance of Roman Catholicism by the tolerance and good will of Protestantism, what justification is there for the Ku Klux Klan? If it is possible to convert an enemy nation into a friendly nation by trust and forgiveness, what justification is there for the treaty of Versailles? But is it possible to overcome evil with good? Again one may risk the observation that by no means everybody believes that it is. We are still in the grip of ancient fears. We instinctively resent the injuries that are done us, and experience a very strong impulse to do unto others as they have done unto us. Good will, moreover, is not always immediately effective. It works at the end, if anything can, but not always at the beginning. Almost everybody who has made the experiment of loving his enemy could relate a few initial experiences that were far from encouraging. It happens, therefore, that the notion of overcoming evil, not with more evil, but with a gallant, sportsmanlike kind of good, is regarded by many persons as far too risky an option for them to choose.

Is there a God who is like Christ? What peace would steal into troubled hearts, what hope would spring up in devastated lives, if only men could believe that there is! What a challenge, too, would be presented to a civilization that makes mock at much for which Jesus of Nazareth stood and died! For if the universe itself is on the side of the Crucified One, a civilization which prefers the pomp of Cæsar to the simplicity of Christ, and puts its

trust in the sword rather than in the cross can hardly hope to escape catastrophe. But are there not circumstances aplenty in which it is, to say the least, a bit difficult to believe that there is good will at the heart of the world? Are there not many episodes, both in nature and in human experience, which appear to reveal something strangely different from the spirit of Jesus? The notion, therefore, that the universe itself is fundamentally Christlike is by no means an unavoidable option.

But notice, now, a certain very real difference between these options and, say, the theory of relativity. No form of truth is unimportant. The theory of relativity, if it can be established, will, no doubt, have some influence upon the life of the world. But pending the discovery of incontestable proof, the average man may withhold judgment without any loss to his fellows or to himself. Not so in the case of these other options.

Is it better to be generous than selfish, always, everywhere, in industry as well as at home? Suppose that in this case a man should decide to wait for overwhelming proof. What in the meantime would become of his life? Is it possible to overcome evil with good? Suppose a man should say, in effect: "Perhaps, and perhaps not. In any event that is an experiment which I, for one, do not intend to make until I know positively that it will work." That, I need hardly add, is substantially the position which most of us do take, with the result that the world goes on fighting fire with

fire, and producing ever greater and more costly conflagrations. Is there a God who is like Christ? In this case not to believe is, in effect, to disbelieve. The agnostic, no less than the atheist, is deprived not merely of the joy and comfort of religious faith but of the moral incentive which springs from the conviction that the universe itself is on the side of Jesus. And by his own refusal to run the risk of belief, he helps to create an atmosphere of uncertainty and doubt which diminishes probably human health and certainly human happiness.

There are, then, some cases where the evidence is not as yet overwhelmingly conclusive, but where a man cannot afford to wait for incontestable proof; where men of heroic mold prefer to run the risk of belief rather than to condemn themselves to the feebleness and futility of unbelief.

There are cases where proof cannot be secured except through action. History shows conclusively that evil cannot be overcome with evil. It has not yet shown conclusively that even in international relationships evil can be overcome with good. And the one only way to find out whether it can is to run the risk of experiment. There are cases too where a kind of proof which nobody can question is not to be expected, but where, even in the absence of mathematical certainty, men may legitimately trust their highest hopes and by so doing bring to their own and others' lives great consolations and inspirations. I can neither prove nor disprove that there is a God who is no less good than Jesus. What

then? I may, if I choose, decide to remain agnostic, venturing nothing, gaining nothing. I may, on the other hand, decide to trust my hopes rather than my fears, and to stake my life on the possibility that the ineradicable conviction of the race that its dreams and aspirations have some foundation in the reality of things is not a cruel cheat, a diabolic lie.

Why should I not run the risk of believing the best rather than the risk of believing the worst, or the risk of believing nothing at all? By daring to believe the best I help to create the best. By choosing to believe the worst I help to create the worst. By refusing to believe anything I help to create—nothing. By choosing to believe that prohibition cannot be made effective I help to make it ineffective. By daring to believe that it can be made effective I help to make it effective. By choosing to believe that war is inevitable I help to make it inevitable. By choosing to believe that peace is possible I help to make it possible. The will to believe the best rather than the worst, the will to stake everything on the possibility of achieving the best—is not that the very essence of faith?

III

One of the immortal declarations of the New Testament is that men are saved by faith. This, by many persons, has been held to mean that they are saved by certain theological opinions. But almost anybody can think of people who have

held tenaciously to such opinions without being noticeably saved from rather noticeably bad dispositions. One finds a trace here of the old fallacy that faith is essentially an intellectual attitude; yet nothing more clearly reveals the volitional aspect of faith than the process by which many a man has risen out of sensuality and selfishness into the likeness of a son of God.

Here is a man who is eager to overcome a crippling habit. But his previous attempts to master it have ended, one after another, in disheartening failure, and now the very recollection of those former defeats unnerves him for further effort. He knows now that he cannot count upon himself. One day he is told that the thing for him to do is to stop thinking about himself, his temptations and failures, and fix his attention upon God or Christ, in the belief that a power that transcends his own weakness will turn the scale in favor of victory. He does not, cannot, know in advance that there is such a power. But in the name of the man he wants to be, he wills to believe that there is; and this very belief in an adequate power delivers him from the demoralization that has been caused by his own previous failures, changes the atmosphere from one of gloom to one of hope, enables him through the imagination to lay hold upon a higher life, and gradually in very truth to achieve it.

By faith, also, are men able to save their fellows.

It is said of Luther Burbank that he perceived in all men the possibility of a good life, and that

many a poor fellow who had suffered a physical or moral breakdown regained his grip because of the faith which Burbank had in him. There are, no doubt, some people in this world who think too highly of themselves and who need to be taken down from their self-erected pedestals. But I am beginning to suspect that there are many more who need to be lifted up from the pit of self-distrust. Even their occasional outbreaks of self-assertion are but pathetic attempts to conceal their torturing sense of inadequacy. Nobody listens when they speak. After a sentence or two they discover that somebody else is doing the talking. Nobody pays very much attention to them; nobody expects them to say or do anything brilliant. They have developed, therefore, an inferiority complex which stands in the way of their possible achievements, and what they need is some Luther Burbank to create in them a proper self-confidence and self-respect. Most of us can accomplish more in an atmosphere of sympathy and confidence, when people appear to value us and believe in us, than we can in an atmosphere of disesteem.

In venturing to believe in men, one runs, of course, the risk of disappointment. Jesus was disappointed in Judas. And unless one is careful to keep his eyes open, he runs, also, the risk of sentimentalism. The notion that all men are natural saints is quite as wide of the mark as the notion that all men are natural devils. It is possible to undervalue human nature and ignore its

divine potentialities. It is likewise possible to overvalue human nature, and obscure its devilish possibilities. And if it does not help matters to call moral heroism a filthy rag, neither does it help matters to call a filthy rag moral heroism. The murderer is not a martyr. The sadist is not a saint.

But there is in every man not only a possible devil but a possible hero. And the faith which dares to hold steadily before a man the divine possibilities of his own nature helps to create the evidence which will validate it. We tend to become what others expect us to be. During the war, President Hibben, of Princeton, received a letter from an American officer, who said to him, "You may be interested in the following incident." Then he told how, just before an attack, when his company was preparing to go over the top, the young lieutenant who stood next to him developed a bad case of nerves, and for one or two dreadful moments lost all control of himself. But presently his will almost visibly stiffened as he said aloud, "Remember that you are a Princeton man." A moment later with extraordinary gallantry and efficiency he led the attack until he was killed. Tempted, lonely, discouraged, distrustful of his own powers, what many a man needs more than anything else in the world, it may be, is to have somebody believe in him and say to him occasionally, "Remember that you are—a man."

By faith, also, are men able to reform their world.

Faith in this case is seen to be what Luther called it, "the mighty creative thing."

With this mighty creative thing men have freed their bodies from hunger and disease, their minds from superstition, their children from the hand of tyranny, and their fellows from the bonds of slavery. They have unlocked the storehouse of nature, developed surgery and sanitation, evolved art and science, conquered the sea and the air, and once and again wrought righteousness. They have done such things because they willed to believe that such things could be done. They would never have done them had they willed to believe that they could not be done. And to-day let it not be forgotten that in no single case could the success of the enterprise be guaranteed at the start. There was just a chance of discovering a cure for rabies; Pasteur took it. There was just a chance of persuading the English Parliament to purchase the freedom of the English slaves; Wilberforce took it. To-day there is just a chance of creating a world court that will be able, by judicial processes, to settle disputes between nations. There is just a chance of developing a league of nations that will be able, by continuous conference and adjustment, to maintain the peace of the world. Are we of this generation willing to take it?

We may, if we choose, refuse to believe that peace is possible, in which case war will probably go on until it makes a cemetery of civilization. We may, on the other hand, will to believe that

duels between nations, like duels between individuals, can be done away, in which case faith once more may be justified. The "mighty creative thing" may build for our children a warless world.

And finally, by faith are men able to face the universe with courage and hope. Here, as everywhere else, faith encounters obstacles. It is not always easy to believe that the universe is on the side of the angels. There are times when the apparent indifference of natural forces to human weal and human woe provokes the anxious query whether man may not be fearfully alone in a universe that notes neither his shout of exultation nor his cry of despair. But here, as elsewhere, faith is the will to believe—not in spite of evidence, although sometimes in spite of immediate evidence—that human dreams are not nobler than life's realities, that human hopes will not finally be mocked by life's ultimate facts. It is possible, of course, to refuse the venture, to let oneself be overwhelmed by those occasional aspects of life which appear to make sport of human idealism. But it is also possible—and, to say the least, just as reasonable—to stake everything on the belief that when man has reached his highest level, his own love of truth, his own awareness of beauty, his own capacity for selfless devotion are a revelation of some permanent passion in the very heart of the world.

The man who refuses the venture robs himself, and may rob others, of mighty hopes and consolations; the man who makes it helps to create an

atmosphere of glad expectancy in which all that enriches and ennobles the human spirit has a chance to flower.

Only one man, perhaps. has ever staked literally everything on his own intuition of an Eternal Goodness at the heart of the world. And it is worthy of note that he is the man concerning whom the world is coming more and more to believe that he is the Way, and the Truth, and the Life. In the perspective of nineteen hundred years, as one considers all that has come to pass as the result of what this man thought and was, is it not difficult to believe that it was merely a pathetic delusion which led him at the last, on a cross, to pray, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit"?

XII

THE WILL TO UNDERSTAND

And the Spirit of Jehovah shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of Jehovah.—*Isaiah 11. 2.*

THE eleventh chapter of Isaiah was written, some think, toward the close of Israel's exile, and presents the prophet's picture of a golden future in which not only human society but even nature would be gloriously transformed. No longer would the powerful exploit the poor; no longer would wild beasts prey upon one another or upon the children of men. All sorts and conditions of men would dwell together in peace and justice, and the wolf and the lion would eat side by side, herded by a little child. None would injure, none would kill; for the world would be as full of the knowledge of God as the bed of the ocean is full of water. And it was the belief of this prophet that the hope which he cherished would one day be realized by an ideal ruler possessing the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit that knows and reverences God.

With the details of this picture we need not concern ourselves. Nor need we stay to consider the remote possibility that a golden age of any description may be ushered in by a single indi-

vidual, however great and powerful and well disposed. But not without profit, perhaps, we may ask ourselves what might happen—what might *not* happen—in this world of ours if only increasing numbers of men should develop a spirit of wisdom and understanding, or, to employ a more modern expression, the will to understand.

I

Every single one of us desires to be understood. When people fail to understand us we feel hurt. When they misunderstand us we feel not only hurt, but angry. We find it difficult to avoid the suspicion that the misunderstanding was deliberate. Many of us, in fact, do not avoid this suspicion; we embrace it. We find a certain degree of compensation in the thought that anyone who really wanted to understand us could and would have understood us. We blundered, perhaps, but with the very best of intentions. Anyone, therefore, who misunderstands us must have willed to misunderstand us, and we undevoutly hope that he may find some sort of satisfaction in doing so, although what sort we simply cannot imagine.

There are, however, a few people who do understand us, and to them we feel how exceedingly grateful—especially when they choose to believe that we are somewhat better than we actually are. This sounds a bit cynical, but really it is not; for most of us do sincerely desire to be somewhat better than we actually are, and if anyone is ever fully

to understand us, he must take into account not only our achievements but also our aspirations. Is it not one of the most passionate of all our hopes that, if not in the eyes of men, at least and at last in the eyes of God, complete understanding will be found?

It follows, therefore, does it not, that since we ourselves have such a passionate desire to be understood, we really ought to make a determined effort to understand others?

What, after all, has anyone to gain through misunderstanding? Is it not a fact that out of misunderstanding come some of the most tragic experiences of life?

In one of her brilliant short stories[1] Dorothy Canfield has told "What Really Happened" in the case of an eight-year-old child whose mother brought him one day to a nerve specialist. When this lad had just turned three he began trying to do some of the interesting things which he saw his father and his mother do, and his father and his mother encouraged him in this, for they considered it very funny and immensely entertaining. He came, therefore, quite naturally to the conclusion that it was altogether right and proper for him to do what grown-up people did, if only he could.

One day, with shining eyes, the boy watched two paper-hangers redecorate the walls of the guest room. He wanted to do what they were doing, but couldn't. A few days later, he watched two

[1] What *Really* Happened, in *Aces*. A Collection of Short Stories, p. 3. G. P. Putnam's Sons, publishers.

sewing-women cut out some curtains for the windows of the guest room. He wanted to do what they were doing, and could, and did. Picking up some scraps of cretonne, he proceeded to cut them with those same shining scissors which he had seen the sewing-women use, and the sewing-women smiled their approval. He too smiled, for he was having a very wonderful time.

In the late afternoon, having had his nap, the boy returned to the guest room. The sewing-women were gone, but lying across the bed was any amount of that imported French cretonne with which they had been working. The scissors too were plainly visible even in the dusk. So the boy climbed up on the bed and began to cut the nearly finished curtains. He found it an even more fascinating performance than the cutting of mere scraps had been.

Presently his mother came to the doorway and said, "What are you doing here, darling?" He was so absorbed in what he was doing that he did not even hear her. So she pressed a button, and then, in the lighted room, she *saw* what he was doing. At the sight of her face, the boy's own face became terror-stricken. What awful thing had happened to make her look so? He screamed. "He ran toward her—for protection." But her voice became loud and angry. She told him that he was the worst little boy in the world. She pointed to the slashed curtains and told him that she would help him to remember never to do such

a thing again. And when, because of his utter inability to comprehend those loud and angry words, he went on screaming, she beat him with her hands. On this, and on subsequent occasions, she had failed to understand What Really Happened. So it came to pass that, five years later, she took him to a nerve specialist who, when asked whether he could do anything for him, somewhat curtly replied, "Not unless I could unlive his life for him, and get him a new mother to begin with."

Whether you are dealing with a boy or a man, capital or labor, modernism or fundamentalism, advocates of armament or advocates of disarmament, pro-leaguers or anti-leaguers, prohibitionists or anti-prohibitionists, there is absolutely nothing of any value to be gained through misunderstanding. A clear recognition of this fact is, I suppose, the essential first step toward a genuine will to understand.

II

But a clear recognition of the futility of misunderstanding, although it makes a good beginning, is not enough to secure a good ending. In order to maintain a resolute will to understand a man needs to exorcise certain evil spirits, one of which is fear.

In relation to misunderstanding, fear is not only effect, but cause. We fear because we misunderstand; yes, and we misunderstand because we fear. Those of us who fear Doctor Fosdick do so because we fail to understand him. We do not see that what he is striving most earnestly to do is not to

tear down but to build up religious faith. But why do we fail to understand him? Is it not because of our fear of change? We find it difficult to believe that a man who advocates any change of theological belief or emphasis is or can be constructive in his innermost intention.

It happens, also, that many of us who have become reconciled to the thought of change in the theological world, who even pride ourselves on our theological up-to-dateness, are, nevertheless, by no means reconciled to the thought of change in the economic world. We approve and applaud Doctor Fosdick, but draw the line at Harry F. Ward. We have our doubts about George Sherwood Eddy, and no doubt about Scott Nearing. So great is our fear of change in the economic world that we simply cannot believe that such men as these are motivated by anything other than an irresponsible desire to throw monkey wrenches into the delicate mechanism of modern society. With respect to them we find it difficult to maintain the conviction that nothing is ever gained through misunderstanding, that even though we may feel called upon finally to oppose what they advocate, we ought at least to be willing to hear what they have to say, and to make an honest effort to understand it.

But if you condemn a position which you assume some one is taking, but which he is not taking, you sacrifice your opportunity to apply intelligent criticism to the position which he is taking. And if, without making any effort to understand his

ideas, his aims, or his spirit, you merely seek to silence him, are you not very apt to play a losing game? What, after all, did the mediæval Inquisition accomplish? Did it prevent the purification of religion or the liberalization of theology? And what have more recent attacks upon scientists accomplished? Have they prevented the discovery and spread of truth? Is it not altogether probable that the Dayton anti-evolution trial has done more to popularize the idea of evolution in this country than have all the textbooks on the subject which are now barred from the schools of Tennessee?

The disposition to regard as an enemy of society anyone who advocates a change of belief or of practice is not any new thing under the sun. Witness the treatment accorded to Socrates and to Jesus. But is it not now high time to face the fact that the fear of change is a primitive, irrational phenomenon, that it is precisely this timid unwillingness to do anything different from what his forebears have done that keeps the savage from becoming anything more than a savage? The truly civilized man does not let the fear of change paralyze his will to understand.

Another evil spirit which needs to be driven out is prejudice.

Someone has described the mental furniture of the average individual who has gone through our American public-school system and is now between thirty and forty years of age. "His mind," he says, "is a museum of immature fixations, snap judg-

ments, picked-up prejudices, and unverifiable hand-me-downs." In order to appreciate the truth of this description, one needs only to fix his own middle-aged mind upon such words as Negro, Jew, Japanese, foreigner, Protestant, Catholic, modernist, fundamentalist, Bolshevism, pacifism, World Court, League of Nations. If he can honestly say, with respect to every one of the matters which these words bring up, that he is entirely free from "immature fixations, snap judgments, picked-up prejudices, unverified hand-me-downs," he is a man in a million.

Someone else has suggested that prejudice is a defense reaction against ignorance. "You are apt," he remarks, "to be 'down on' what you are not 'up on.'" How many persons who are bitterly opposed to the League of Nations have ever taken the trouble to read even so much as the covenant of the League, much less to inform themselves as to what, in the seven years of its existence, the League has actually accomplished? They are "down on" it because they are not "up on" it. How many persons who are bitterly opposed to pacifism cling stubbornly to the belief that almost every outstanding pacifist in this country is being directed, if not actually financed, from Moscow; that the so-called youth movement in this country is certainly of Russian origin, that conventions of youth such as those which have been held in Indianapolis, Louisville, Evanston and Milwaukee are merely the camouflaged attempts of sinister foreign-

born forces to capture the mind of young America —and all this in spite of overwhelming evidence to the contrary. Yes, and how many persons who profess to be liberal are fully persuaded that every conservative is motivated only by a selfish desire to maintain an order which is profitable to him?

When a man is in the grip of a full-grown prejudice, there is almost nothing in apparent support of it which he will refuse to believe, and almost nothing in apparent refutation of it which he will consent to believe. Prejudice too must be exorcised if one would cultivate the will to understand.

It might also be suggested that the will to understand is hardly encouraged by the practice of reading history from but a single textbook—of reading, let us say, what happened in 1776 only from the American point of view, or what happened in 1861 only from the Northern point of view, or what happened in 1914 only from the French or English point of view.

Certainly it might be suggested that the will to understand is hardly encouraged by the habit of making sweeping generalizations. Germany, someone says, is as imperialistic and as militaristic as ever. And that, it may be, is perfectly true of a certain indeterminate number of Germans. But are all Germans, the whole seventy million of them, as imperialistic and as militaristic as ever? Down in South America to-day there are newspapers which are saying that Uncle Sam, notwithstanding the Washington conference and other apparently mag-

nificent gestures, is secretly following an imperialistic policy which is aimed at the very heart of his southern neighbors. Uncle Sam? Who is Uncle Sam? A few of us, or all of us? If Uncle Sam is a few of us, these South American strictures may possibly have a certain measure of justification; but if Uncle Sam is all of us, or even a considerable majority of us, they are probably absurd.

This habit of fixing attention upon one or more individuals and assuming that they represent the thought, aims, ambition, character of an entire nation is, unfortunately for the world's peace, an exceedingly common one. Many of us fell into it during the Great War. The militaristic, saber-rattling, belligerently mustachio-ed Kaiser—he was Germany. The soldier who ordered the burning of Louvain—he was Germany. The sailor who ordered the sinking of the Lusitania—he was Germany. We thought of him when we thought of Germany, when we hated Germany, when we fought Germany, when we demanded that Germany should be punished. We refused to believe that there were many men in Germany who were not like him, and many women in Germany whose only offense was that they had given birth to sons whom the German government had conscripted and sent into the trenches to take pot-shots at our sons. We forgot that there were children in Germany who were as utterly guiltless of the whole tragic business as our own children were. We forgot—if, indeed, we ever took the pains to learn—that there was in

Germany a party working for peace, that men like Karl Liebknecht and women like Clara Luxembourg protested from first to last against what they considered to be the ruinous policies of Prussian goose-steppers.

We made sweeping generalizations, and so when the war was over, many of us felt no horror at a blockade of Germany which was prolonged for eighteen months, and with such pitiful, disastrous effects upon women and children that an English general, whose loyalty and gallantry were above question, uttered a formal protest against it.

To-day every nation has its imperialists, its militarists, its jingoists. But every nation has also its liberals, its men and women with an international outlook and a passionate desire for justice and good will and peace. And every nation has likewise a very large population who are chiefly concerned with their own intimately personal affairs. If, therefore, a man sincerely desires to know what is going on in the world, he must beware of this truly dangerous habit of judging a whole nation by the words and deeds of a relatively few of its nationals.

III

Nothing of value is gained through misunderstanding, but how very much may be gained by the will to understand.

Nineteen hundred years ago a Man was nailed to a cross, and as they raised him, torn and bleeding, upon the instrument of his torture, he prayed,

"Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." What a marvelous will to understand! Those rough and ignorant Roman soldiers, acting under stern authority—they did not realize what they were doing. Even those frightened priests who were the instigators of the tragedy—did they fully appreciate what they were doing? But to realize that they did not, to will, even under such circumstances, to understand—how wonderful it was.

In his gripping play, "The Terrible Meek," Charles Rann Kennedy makes one of those Roman soldiers say, "The future is his." The future was his. In the presence of that strange Man hanging on his cross with a prayer of forgiveness upon his lips, the world more and more is beginning to see that misunderstanding and hate are destructive, and that discernment and love are creative.

A director of the Bank of America, and vice-president and director of several large mining companies, Samuel A. Lewisohn, makes an earnest plea for the will to understand in industry.[1] He believes that no good can come from the "hard-boiled, die-hard spirit," which sees in an agitator merely an obstruction to be removed, and in a labor union merely a nuisance to be crushed, but that vast good can come from the determination to look at matters through the other man's eyes. To-day, he says, the man who can discuss intel-

[1] *Business and the Church*, edited by Jerome Davis. Chapter, "The Psychology of Employers." Published by The Century Company.

ligently the mechanistic side of industry is looked upon with profound respect; whereas the man who can discuss with equal intelligence the humanistic side is regarded, at best, as no more than an interesting figure. But he believes that a day will come in the industrial world when men who are playing the game of human organization will be held in no less honor than the men who are playing the purely financial game. What is needed, he thinks, is a new emotional attitude toward the subject on the part of employers and executives. "Instead of boasting of the size of their plants, the quantity of their output, and the amount of their profits, they must be induced to boast of the excellence of their human organization. Their sporting instincts must be diverted in this direction."

Here, then, from the pen, not of a preacher, but of an experienced executive, comes the significant suggestion that a very much better social order awaits only the will to understand and the good will to co-operate.

Carry this suggestion into a still larger field, that of international relationships: the will to understand another nation as one hopes, and usually expects, that other nation will understand his nation, and not misunderstand it even when things are said and done which are easily liable to misconstruction. Is it not now fairly clear that the world was dragged dizzily, dangerously on through a second year, a third, and a fourth year, almost to the point where civilization would have col-

lapsed, simply because both sides, fed up on propaganda, were too madly blind to understand, or were, perhaps, prevented from understanding by a determined censorship? And is it likely that the spectacle of another world war would haunt the imagination of the next generation if only, through some such agency as the League of Nations, France and Germany and England and America and Italy and Japan should maintain a resolute and continuously informed will to understand?

Out of understanding comes creation. Said an ancient Hebrew:

> "Get understanding.
> Exalt her, and she will promote thee;
> . . . . . .
> She will give to thy head a chaplet of grace;
> A crown of beauty will she deliver to thee."

Is it not true that out of understanding of the laws of art has come the Sistine Madonna, a chaplet of grace; that out of understanding of the laws of architecture has come Westminster Abbey, a crown of beauty? Is it not true that as men have exalted science, she has promoted them, delivered them from cold and hunger, from darkness and disease, and enabled them to do many things which once seemed impossible?

Is there not reason, then, to suppose that if now men should try to understand one another, out of that knowledge too would come some marvelous creation, a world of peace and plenty, a world of brotherhood and joy, fulfilling the dream of one

who wrote, "I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven, . . . made ready as a bride adorned for her husband"; and of that still greater One who urged men to pray, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth."

"Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Would it be misleading to read it, "Where two or three are gathered together with a will to understand one another, there am I in the midst"? And if as much could be said, not merely of two or three, but of group after group of men, representing every phase of human activity and concern, is it not conceivable that the world as a whole would in some new and wonderful sense become the dwelling place of God?

XIII

THE WILL TO BE BRAVE

TWENTY years ago I read Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus* as a part of a required course in English literature, took a horrible three-hour examination on it, and got out of it very little except a passing grade—if indeed, I got that. But recently, having no academic ends to serve, desiring no credits, no degrees, I reread certain portions of it with unusual interest and profit. For, notwithstanding the author's own statement that with but a single exception nothing in *Sartor* is autobiographical, that it is all a symbolical myth, one cannot avoid the suspicion that the sorrows and struggles of Herr Diogenes Teufelsdrockh are but a literary reflection of the sorrows and struggles of Thomas Carlyle; so that what one really finds in *Sartor* (if he is not prevented by scholastic requirements from finding anything at all) is the way in which a shy, proud, sensitive, and somewhat skeptical spirit managed to adjust itself to life and to make of life a worthful adventure.

Carlyle himself acknowledged that the incident which is reported to have occurred in the close atmosphere of the dirty little street in Paris occurred quite literally to himself during a three weeks' period of almost total sleeplessness and despair. His physical condition was partly the

cause, partly the result, of his mental condition, and his mental condition was such that he entertained the thought of self-destruction. It seemed to him that the universe neither cared nor even knew that he was suffering. It had no heart, no mind; it was just "one huge dead immeasurable steam engine, rolling on in its dead indifference to grind [him] limb from limb." But one day he asked himself what he was afraid of, and whether there was anything which ought to cause him to pip and whimper like a coward. He forced himself to face the worst that life might inflict upon him, and demanded to know whether he could not endure it. He finally decided that in no event would he go through life cowering and trembling, that whatever came he would meet it and defy it. And he says that from that hour he inclines to date his new birth, that then, perhaps, it was that he began to be a man.

Now, it ought, of course, to be said at once that this attitude of sheer defiance is by no means the only one which a brave man may take. It is neither the only one nor the noblest one, as I shall attempt to suggest later on. But certainly it is better for a man to say:

> "In the fell clutch of circumstance
> I have not winced nor cried aloud.
> Under the bludgeonings of chance,
> My head is bloody but unbowed"

than it is for him to whimper, "Life has dealt me one hard blow after another. My head is all bloody;

I am ready to give up." And perhaps it is true, as Carlyle never tired of insisting, that the ultimate question which every man is obliged to face and answer is, "Wilt thou be a hero or a coward?"

I

Margaret Fuller once announced that she had accepted the universe. When this momentous decision was reported to Carlyle, he grunted, "Gad, she'd better." But after one has joined in the laugh, one begins to suspect that the joke was not altogether on Margaret Fuller. Carlyle himself, as we have seen, once resolved to defy the universe, which was better, no doubt, than letting the universe terrify him. But would it not have been better still had he resolved to accept it and to make the most and best of it?

In his well-known lecture on "Immortality" William James pays a deserved tribute to those prehistoric brothers of ours who, "plunged in blackest ignorance, preyed upon by hideous and grotesque superstitions," did nevertheless hold fast the faith that "existence in any form is better than nonexistence," and so "rescued triumphantly from the jaws of imminent destruction the torch of life." They did, in a way, what Margaret Fuller did. They accepted the universe, accepted life, and they did so on no easy terms.

Life, it appears, cannot even yet be had on easy terms. Its physical environment has, to be sure, become vastly more propitious. How different,

for instance, the night is for modern man from what it was for primitive man, who, literally as well as figuratively, was compelled to grope his way in the dark. Life's intellectual environment too has amazingly changed. Science has banished superstition, and fear of the mysterious has been transmuted into an incentive to study. But notwithstanding these improvements in its physical and intellectual environment, life still involves struggle, pain, bereavement, sorrow. Much, indeed, that hardly ruffled primitive man has become for modern man an exquisite form of mental pain.

Nor is there any reason to suppose that life will ever be had on easy terms. Dark and cold may lose their terrors. Fear born of ignorance may give way to courage born of knowledge. But life will continue to involve suffering, which will become not less but more acute as human beings advance in culture. It will never be had on easy terms. It will, therefore, continually force the question, "Wilt thou be a hero or a coward?"

The coward in man will sometimes question whether life is worth the price which one must pay for it. In recent weeks an astonishing number of college students have decided not to bear "the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune," but "to take arms against a sea of troubles, and by opposing end them." Let us be slow to condemn them, especially if we ourselves have never tasted the bloody sweat of Gethsemane. Let us also understand that cases of this sort are very apt to have

a pathological aspect. Browning once declared that "soul helps flesh no more than flesh helps soul." It is likewise true that soul hurts flesh no more than flesh hurts soul. Carlyle's fits of depression synchronized with his attacks of dyspepsia. But the fact remains that some dyspeptics have been able to fight off despondency, and however large a mantle of charity we may throw over the failure of other persons to bear the blows and burdens of life, it would no doubt be a wholesome thing for us to put to ourselves that searching question, "Wilt thou be a hero or a coward?"

Once and again the coward in us will want to run away from life. But the hero in us, if only we give him a little encouragement, will find it possible to rejoice in life and to make of it a worthful adventure. The coward in us will want to insist that life ought to be had on easier terms. The hero in us will cry, "No!" It is precisely because life cannot be had on any easier terms that it is able to employ man's highest powers and to call forth the best that is in him. Did not Goethe write:

> "Who never ate with tears his bread,
> Who never, through the troubled hours,
> Weeping, sat upon his bed,
> He knows ye not, ye heavenly powers."

Did not Browning tell the pathetic story of a boy and a girl, one a student of music, the other a student of art, who lived in neighboring garrets in the Latin quarter of Paris, and fell deeply in love with each other, and wanted to marry, and never did,

through fear of poverty? She wedded "a rich old lord"; he was dubbed knight and elected to membership in the Royal Academy. But Browning makes her say:

"Each life unfulfilled you see:
It hangs still patchy and scrappy.
We have not sighed deep, laughed free,
Starved, feasted, despaired—been happy."

It is precisely because life can never be had on easy terms that it is worth the living.

II

After a man has accepted the universe, it remains for him to accept himself. We are, most of us, ordinary men, and we hate to admit it. We do not have five talents, we have only two; many of us have only one. But we cling tenaciously to the hope that some day we shall come into the possession of more, and when the years pass and we remain undistinguished, our disappointment is intense.

This is especially true of Americans. In countries where a rigid caste system still prevails and a man is not expected to rise above the station in which he was born, there is not, of course, that secret tormenting ambition to excel which one finds in countries where there is no social barrier to brilliant achievement. But here in the United States, where men of humble birth and meager surroundings have risen to conspicuous heights in every field of human endeavor, it is not surprising

that every boy who is worth his salt should aspire to something more than mediocrity in his chosen field. As a matter of fact, thousands of young men do entertain such an ambition. As young attorneys they secretly hope that some day they will be leaders of the bench or of the bar. As young physicians they venture to hope that they will distinguish themselves in medicine or surgery. As young theologs they share the hope of becoming to their generation what Maltbie Davenport Babcock was to his, or even what Phillips Brooks was to his. In a country like ours the tradition of spectacular careers that begin in obscurity and reach distinction has stimulated ambition to an extraordinary degree. Men who have never confessed as much to themselves are, nevertheless, living in hopes of a brilliant personal achievement; and when, after years of struggle, their hopes are shattered, some of them give way to bitterness and despair.

In the presence, therefore, not only of the universe, but of his own self a man is confronted by the question, "Wilt thou be a hero or a coward?" If he possesses but two talents, the coward in him will suggest, "Since you are not endowed with five talents, why should you exert yourself?" If he possesses but one talent, the coward in him will complain: "Life has refused to equip you with even so many as two talents. Why, therefore, should you toil and moil?" But the hero in him will rise up and say: "Instead of lamenting the fact that

you do not have five talents, rejoice in the fact that you do have at least two talents and see what you can do with them. Instead of sniveling and blubbering and tearing your hair because you do not have two talents, bravely resolve to make the most of your one talent."

It has been truly observed that "if the famous life has great trials, it has also great inspirations; the obscure life has the trials without the triumphs." Lincoln has his hour of depression when he loses the senatorship; he has also his hour of elation when he gains the Presidency. Pasteur has his years of struggle when his theories are fiercely combated; he has also his day of triumph when he is elected a member of the Academy. John Doe trudges along his monotonous road, bearing his prosaic burden, uttering at times a groan of weariness, but never a shout of exultation. And one sometimes wonders which reveals the greater courage, the famous life that faces in the beginning the awful threat of failure but knows in the end the triumph of great achievement, or the obscure life that from beginning to end must be content with unromantic activities.

There is, of course, something very splendid in the contributions which greatly gifted men have made to the race—the compositions of Handel, the canvases of Leonardo da Vinci, the sculptures of Michelangelo, the plays of Shakespeare, the songs of Burns. But is there not also something very splendid in the contributions of those lesser men

who have bravely accepted their limitations and made the most of their opportunities? Not theirs the triumph of brilliant achievement; theirs only the triumph of brave adjustment to disappointing limitations. But by their faithful performance of unromantic tasks, they too have furthered the progress of the race and helped to beautify the human spirit.

III

After a man has accepted the universe and himself, it still remains for him to accept his lot, the peculiar situation in which he finds himself.

By this, let me hasten to explain, I do not mean that the brave man must be content with his lot. Men who are content with poverty are not brave, but lazy. Men who are content with tyranny and injustice are not brave, but servile. The complaint has sometimes been brought against Christianity that by fixing men's attention upon the blessings of heaven it has made them unconcerned about the brutalities of earth. In a book recently published the suggestion is offered that the early Christians, when they discovered that they could do nothing with "their great brutal world of Roman domination," took refuge in an imaginary heaven which "offered escape on the one hand from utter hopelessness, on the other from grilling objective effort." This provocative suggestion no more explains the Christian hope of immortality than does Freudian psychology the love of a man for a dog. But it does serve to call attention to the undeniable fact that

religion may become a timid flight from reality, an unheroic road of escape from the hard actualities of life. When religion encourages a man to rise above "the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune," when it helps him to go through a long illness with an unbroken spirit, or to meet bereavement without despair, it renders him a service which lies beyond the power of words to describe; but when it makes him insensitive to situations which it lies within his power to remedy, it becomes merely a kind of spiritual narcotic.

When I suggest that the brave man will accept his lot, I do not mean that he will be content with it, but only that he will resolve to do the best he can in the situation in which he finds himself, and not give way to bitter and futile complaint because life has not granted him a more propitious situation.

It is easy for a man to suppose that his own road is peculiarly hard. He knows more about his own situation than he can know about anyone's else situation, and is, therefore, prone to conclude that fate has been to him unusually unkind—unless, of course, he happens to be one of those apparently favored individuals who have more than heart could wish. Yet many another man, if only he knew it, is bearing a burden far heavier than his.

"God pity all the lonely folk
With griefs they do not tell,
Women waking in the night
And men dissembling well."

The trusted physician and the trusted priest know that many a life which seems to be sheltered is beaten upon by merciless storms, and how amazingly true it is that most of the people who have done great things in the world have started out with heavy handicaps of one kind or another!

Here, for instance, is Charles Lamb, who comes home one day to find that his sister, in a fit of insanity, has injured his father and killed his mother. What does he do? He writes to Coleridge, "Thank God I am very calm and composed and able to do the best that remains to do." He surrenders his own hope of marriage and devotes himself to his stricken sister, winning her back to sanity by his unshakable faith and tenderness. And he writes those inimitable essays which have delighted and charmed the world!

There are circumstances which can be changed; the brave man accepts them as a kind of challenge which life has thrown down to him, and undertakes to change them. There are circumstances which cannot be changed; them also the brave man accepts as a summons to the heroic in him, and proceeds to adjust himself to them. When a man is confronted with something which he cannot but wish were otherwise, but which is apparently inevitable, then indeed, is he face to face with the question, "Wilt thou be a hero or a coward?" Will he let life floor him, break him, defeat him, or will he be man enough to say to life, "I am equal to this; I shall transmute even this evil into good"?

A man discovers that he has an incurable disease. What is he to do, give up or go on with his work as long as possible and as cheerfully as possible? The brave man determines to go on. Robert Louis Stevenson writes to George Meredith that for fourteen years he has not had a day of real health; that he has written in bed and out of it, written when his throat was torn by coughing and his head swam for weakness. "I was made," he says, "for contest, and the powers have so willed that my battlefield shall be this dingy, inglorious one of the bed and the physic bottle." But however inglorious the battlefield, the battle itself was glorious.

With equal gallantry Henry Drummond faced the inevitable. At the very meridian of his public usefulness and personal power he was stricken down by a strange disease, "a malignant growth of the bones," which caused him constant and excruciating pain, and for which there was no cure. But to the very end his sense of humor remained unabated, he retained his interest in politics and literature, he kept in touch with absent friends, "surprising them with telegrams of congratulation or sympathy." And those who came to comfort him made the astonishing discovery that it was he who had comforted them.

Many of us have a feeling that, excepting only the loss of reason, there is nothing which we could so hardly accept as the loss of sight. What if that were one of the inevitabilities which confronted us?

But even to that loss George Matheson bravely adjusts himself, goes on with his ministry, dictates his books, and writes,

> "O Light that followest all my way,
> I yield my flickering torch to thee,
> My heart restores its borrowed ray,
> That in thy sunshine's blaze its day
> May brighter, fairer be."

The supreme instance of courage in the presence of the inevitable one finds in Gethsemane. There is no attempt to be dramatic: "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass away from me." But when there seems to be no alternative save cowardly surrender, the prayer changes and becomes, "My Father, if this cannot pass away except I drink it, thy will be done." And how evident it is that such acceptance of the inevitable is a far nobler achievement than mere defiance of it; that to say,

> "Under the bludgeonings of chance
> My head is bloody but unbowed,"

falls something short of the moral glory of the consecration of Christ.

Soon or late, in one form or another, it comes to us all—Gethsemane, the Inevitable. When it does, there are two roads that a man may take. One leads to cowardice or despair—and despair is cowardice. The other leads to Calvary and an Easter morning. And is there under any sky anything so heartening, so altogether inspiring, as the sight of some man who emerges from Gethsemane with head erect and heart courageous?

IV

I have suggested that there is and ought to be such a thing as the will to be brave. But I am not unaware of the fact discovered by modern neurologists that a sheer, naked will to be brave may produce all sorts of nervous disorders. Shell-shock, for example, with all its attendant effects, including blindness, deafness, dumbness, paralysis, is simply the result of fear that has been repressed by the will. A man is afraid of being hit by an exploding shell, afraid not only of death but of mutilation, a twisted limb, a disfigured face. But he is even more afraid of being afraid and especially of betraying fear. So he forces himself, gallant soul that he wants to be, to appear brave, and the result is shell-shock. It is evident, therefore, that the will itself needs to be re-enforced, and human experience has revealed at least two powers that can give it the needed support.

One of them is love. Perfect love casteth out all fear. All the way up the scale of life from a hen whose chicks are threatened to a human mother whose children are imperiled, perfect love casteth out all fear. And the love which in this case is a very primitive thing may be lifted into something which will operate in an even grander way. A man may develop what Bertrand Russell calls "an impersonal outlook on life," a habit of "valuing much that is not himself," of caring for much that lies beyond his own doorstep. When John Bright was left with a motherless child, on the very next

day after the funeral, his friend Richard Cobden came to see him and said to him: "There are at this moment in thousands of homes in this country wives and children who are dying of hunger. If you will come along with me, we will never rest until we have gotten rid of the corn laws." And Bright himself declared that it was the interest thus begotten in something beyond himself which enabled him to stand up under a shattering bereavement.

The other emotion which appears able to offer re-enforcement to the will to be brave is faith. When Carlyle thought of the universe as being dead, "a huge dead immeasurable steam engine," the best he was able to do was to defy it. When he thought of the universe as being alive, the living garment of God, when he cried out, "O Heavens, is it He, then, that ever speaks through thee, that lives and loves in thee, that lives and loves in me?" then was he able not merely to defy it but to trust it. And that will to be brave which might eventually have broken him, had it been maintained only by a spirit of stubborn defiance, began presently to heal and hearten him when it drew its nourishment from a growing faith in the greatness and goodness of God.

XIV

THE WILL TO BE KIND

ANYONE who is acquainted with the history of morals knows that man's conception of goodness, his notion of what constitutes the good life, has undergone some very striking changes during, say, the past three thousand years. Will it, perhaps, undergo some equally striking changes during the next three thousand years? One wonders, and then one realizes that many of his contemporaries are greatly disturbed over this apparently undeniable fact that not only man's intellectual beliefs but his moral standards have changed, are now changing, and will probably go on changing. A generation that considered it wrong to whistle on Sunday considered it right to own Negro slaves; a generation that is conscience-stricken over the fact of war feels no slightest moral hesitancy in doing on Sunday many things that would have caused their grandfathers moral anguish. "What is truth?" asked an ancient governor. "What is right?" asks many a modern youth.

For those young people to-day who really want to do right, but who not infrequently find themselves in some situation where it seems desperately difficult to know what is right, Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick is proposing another question; namely, Is it beautiful? If, he suggests, you cannot decide

whether something is right or wrong, ask yourself, "Is it beautiful or ugly?" I myself feel deeply grateful for this suggestion. The question, What is beautiful? may, to be sure, prove quite as difficult to answer as the question, What is good or right? Yet I should not be surprised to discover that there are, under present psychological conditions, some acts whose wrongness a man might fail to see, but whose ugliness might give him pause. There is, however, another question which might helpfully be asked by persons who are in moral doubt. If you cannot decide whether something is right, ask yourself, Is it kind? Someone may quite properly remark that the question, What is kind? is merely a particular form of the question, What is right? But I have the feeling that there are some things which a man might allow himself to do were he only to ask, Is it right? but which he could hardly bring himself to do were he to stop and ask, Is it kind?

Every now and then I turn to Roget's *Thesaurus of English Words and Phrases*, not merely to enlarge my vocabulary, but to fortify my soul. Those of you who are acquainted with this very present help in linguistic trouble will recall that one may find in parallel columns the synonyms and antonyms for any given word. It is possible, therefore, to look here upon a verbal picture of kindness and a verbal picture of unkindness. The one presents a personality that is cordial, obliging, gracious, considerate, warm-hearted, large-hearted, merciful.

The other presents a personality that is ill-natured, ungracious, disobliging, caustic, harsh, hard-hearted, selfish, ruthless. And is there not something in the breast of every man which tells him which of these personalities he ought to prefer?

I

The conviction that a man ought to be kind, that there is at least some circle of human relationships within which he ought to be unselfish, is a very ancient one. It appears in the Old Testament, not only in the New; in primitive life, not only in what we somewhat uncertainly call civilization. It is one of those convictions which not only live but grow amid whatever other changes of intellectual belief and moral intuition.

"Whether there be tongues, they shall cease." That unintelligible gibberish which some of the earliest Christians regarded as the evidence of Christian vitality is regarded to-day as a pathological phenomenon. "Whether there be prophecies, they shall be done away." Even the inspired preaching of one generation ceases to inspire the next. In the various lives of John Wesley you read of the wonderful effect which his sermons had on the thousands who heard them; how the tears of tough, almost brutalized, miners ran in gutters down their grimy cheeks. Then you read the sermons themselves and hardly a spark is struck in your own soul. Whether there be inspired preaching, it shall cease to inspire. "Whether there be knowledge, it

shall be done away." Truth, to be sure, abides. Truth remains the same yesterday, to-day, and forevermore. But much which passes for knowledge is at best but a partial glimpse of truth. In Europe, six hundred years ago, a multitude of men would not have hesitated to say, "We know that the earth is flat, that comets proclaim the wrath of God, that storms and drought are the work of the prince of the powers of the air, and that disease is caused by the devil." As one considers how much of what in other days was counted as knowledge is now counted as ignorance, he cannot but wonder how much of what is held to be fact to-day will be viewed as doubtful to-morrow, and known to be inaccurate on some to-morrow's morrow. Whether there be knowledge, it shall be done away, but now abideth love; now abideth the conviction that love is good, that in any event a man ought to be kind.

II

"It is," says a modern psychologist, "a well-known fact that preachers are always preaching against the sins to which they are unconsciously most prone." I, for my part, consciously hope that this fact is not nearly so well known as he appears to think it is. But fact it may be, and one wonders whether the hand that penned the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians was not, perhaps, prompted by a heart that realized its own proneness to be unkind. Saint Paul did, undoubtedly, possess a tempestuous temper. When, during his

trial, Jesus was struck on the mouth, all that he said was, "If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil: but if well, why smitest thou me?" But when, during one of his trials, Saint Paul was struck on the mouth by order of the high priest, he blurted out, "God shall smite thee, thou whited wall"; which makes him appear very human, does it not? Nor did he hesitate to write, "Beware of dogs," when he was thinking, not of animals, but of men who differed from him in certain of their opinions. Saint Paul was a saint who narrowly escaped being a bigot. But if he was inclined to be a bit ruthless in dealing with others, he was even more ruthless in dealing with himself. Certainly, it must be acknowledged that he desperately wanted to be kind. He saw and said that nothing could serve as a substitute for kindness.

"If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am become sounding brass, or a clanging cymbal." Some time ago I listened to two speeches delivered to the same audience on the same theme and, as it appeared, from the same point of view. Both speakers held the same convictions, but the first merely irritated his audience, the second set them to thinking. And I strongly suspect that the second succeeded because he spoke from a heart full of kindness; and that the first failed because he spoke from a heart full of bitterness. Eloquence cannot serve as a substitute for kindness.

"If I . . . know all mysteries, . . . and if I have

all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing." Science—how we respect it! Have we not reason to respect it? Has it not delivered us from groveling fears and gruesome superstitions; has it not enabled us to conquer disease and the sea and the air, and to cause the desert to blossom as the rose? And faith, is it not indeed "the mighty creative thing," the emotional energy with which men have overpassed every kind of obstacle and done things which to timid, unbelieving folk had appeared impossible? But can science alone lead us into the land of our heart's desire? Has not the head of the English air force recently suggested that the aeroplane may prove to be, not a glorious asset, but a dangerous liability? Can even faith, regardless of its objective, create for us the world of our dreams? If the faith of an Abraham Lincoln may create a democracy, may not the faith of a Mussolini create a despotism? If the faith of a scientist may establish a university, may not the faith of a bigot set up an inquisition? Faith divorced from love becomes an incentive to tyranny. Science divorced from goodwill becomes an instrument of destruction.

"And if," continues the relentless apostle, "I bestow all my goods to feed *the poor*, and if I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profiteth me nothing." He is unwilling to acknowledge that even charity or even martyrdom can serve as a substitute for kindness. When the hand gives, but the heart holds back, does not the soul still

hunger? When I "contribute something to charity," but take no personal interest in folks who are poor or sick or sad, do I not fail to minister to their deepest needs? And is it not conceivable that a man might suffer martyrdom in a spirit of self adulation, or in proud contempt for the unseeing mob of men who have failed to recognize the truth in him? And is it not certain that if he did do so, his martyrdom would never move the world as did the crucifixion of Christ? There is absolutely no substitute for kindness.

III

It has often been remarked that youth is unkind; and if one were to insert the word "unconsciously," the remark would have, perhaps, a certain amount of justification. Youth is at times unconsciously unkind because it has had, as yet, but little experience of the blows and burdens of life. Its own head is unbloody, its own back unbent. Children have to be taught not to look too curiously at a physical deformity. Young people who have never been exposed to a terrific blast of temptation are apt to be fiercely uncharitable, because wholly uncomprehending, in the presence of moral collapse. It is, doubtless, true that the will to be kind cannot be fully developed until one has reached an age when life itself has opened the eyes of the soul, and one begins to suspect that there is a vast deal of truth in the old French proverb, "To know all is to forgive all."

But, alas! it is not only youth that is consciously or unconsciously unkind. "Kindness," writes Shakespeare in *As You Like It*, "nobler ever than revenge." We all applaud that. But suppose he had written, "Kindness, more effective ever than revenge." Would we all applaud that? We can hardly deny the intuition that kindness is nobler than revenge, but even so, we find it difficult to persuade ourselves that it is more effective than revenge. We feel a measure of sympathy with that member of England's Parliament who cried out recently in the heat of a debate on disarmament, "God help Britain if the empire must be defended by the ethics of the Sermon on the Mount." Is it to laugh?

Not yet have we learned the lesson of the old parable of the wind and the sun. There was, as you remember, a dispute between the wind and the sun as to which was the stronger. In the midst of it, a traveler appeared with a big cloak about him, and they agreed that the one who could force this traveler to remove his cloak would be acknowledged the stronger. The wind blew a furious blast, but the traveler merely squared his jaw and clutched his cloak the more tightly. Then the sun appeared. The traveler relaxed, lifted up his face, smiled, and presently took off his cloak. That old dispute between the wind and the sun is still going on, and many of us are still backing the wind. French bayonets could not make the German dig coal in the Ruhr. Soviet intimidation could not make the

peasant grow grain in Russia. These two attempts which the wind has recently made to force the traveler to take off his cloak have conspicuously failed, yet many of us are still backing the wind. Mr. Arthur Brisbane is still insisting that the only way to protect ourselves is to arm ourselves; which sounds very much like what was said in Germany before the war. It proved then to be a losing bet, but many of us are still ready to make it.

One sometimes wonders whether the spirit of Christ may not one day become articulate and cry out, "O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you?" But one feels encouraged by the belief that steadily increasing is the number of persons in every quarter of the world who are beginning to suspect that the sun is stronger than the wind, that kindness is more effective than cruelty, that when it comes to conquest, constructive conquest, the Quaker can put it all over the militarist.

IV

I intimated a while ago that the conviction that a man ought to be kind is a very ancient one, but I was careful to add, "within at least some circle of human relationships." That this qualification must be made is evidenced by the very word "kind," which comes from the same Anglo-Saxon word as does the word "kin." Kindness was originally an expression of kin-ness. A man was expected to be, and normally was, kind to his kin, his own flesh and blood. It has been observed that "there is

no feature of savage life more nearly universal than the kindness and tenderness of savages, even of savage fathers, for their little children." Professor MacDougall says that many a time he has watched "a blood-thirsty head-hunter of Borneo spending a day at home, tenderly nursing his infant in his arms." But even though he is kind to his own children, a blood-thirsty head-hunter of Borneo is not exactly a desirable person to have around. Nor is an American magnate who lavishes affection upon his own family, but who can be, and sometimes is, ruthless in dealing with his competitors, and relentless in dealing with persons who are dependent upon him for their jobs.

Kindness, like charity, begins at home, but if it ends there it becomes indistinguishable from selfishness. Love of children is, after all, a kind of self-love. Our children are projections of ourselves. We may scold them, for their good, of course, and incidentally to relieve our own feelings; but let anybody else find fault with them, and how we do resent it! They are *our* children, a part of *us*. When you hit them, you hit at *us*. If a man is kind merely to his own kin, what does he more than a blood-thirsty head-hunter of Borneo?

What is now imperatively needed is an enlargement of the circle within which a man is expected to be and really wants to be kind. The circle was enlarged, in imagination at least, when an unknown Hebrew wrote, "If a stranger sojourn with thee in your land, ye shall not do him wrong." He shall

"be unto you as the home-born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself." It was further enlarged when another Hebrew quoted the great saying, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," and then told the story of the good Samaritan to drive home the fact that every human being in need is our neighbor. It was still further enlarged when this same Hebrew declared, "Ye have heard that it was said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy: but I say unto you, Love your enemies, and pray for them that persecute you."

So, to-day, we can at least imagine something which primitive man never even dreamed of. We can imagine a circle including not merely a man's own child, but his neighbor's child; not merely his business associate, but his chauffeur and the maid who serves at his table; not merely his fellow country-man, but his fellow human; not merely his friend, but his foe. We can at least imagine a circle embracing not only a man's kin, but his kind, and we can say that in every relationship included in that circle a man ought to be kind.

That, someone says, is the stuff that dreams are made of. And he is right in what he says, but wrong in the way in which he says it. That *is* the stuff that dreams are made of; but, as Mr. Wells insists, dreams have a way of becoming realities after those who scoff at them become dreams. One touch of human nature makes the whole world kin: that is an actual fact, as, for instance, our diseases and our prejudices abundantly

testify. One touch of human nature makes the whole world kind: that is as yet an ideal, a dream, but some day even that dream may come true.

Matthew Arnold dwelt much on the thought that there is in this world a power not ourselves that is making for righteousness. Let me venture to state my own belief that there is in this world a power not ourselves that is making for kindness, a cosmic will to be kind. It is, I should say, my own belief only in the sense that I have made my own a belief which has possessed the souls of a multitude of men ever since the day when Hosea caught his vision of the love of God. I am not unaware of the facts which appear to deny this. Some of them I have only observed, as one who looks on with concern and compassion. But some, at least, I have faced in my own experience. It does sometimes seem as though there were too much pain in the world. But looking back, yes, and looking within, one can see that through pain there has come progress. And sometimes one dares to believe that the whole world process reveals a love, an everlasting, almighty love, that suffers long and is kind.

XV

REVERENCE

And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.—*Exodus 3. 5.*

Moses removed his shoes. Would Mr. Mencken have removed even so much as his hat?

But why should Moses have put off his shoes? Might he not have argued that the place whereon he was standing was no more holy than any other place? Might he not have concluded that his vision of God was an illusion, that all visions of God are illusions? Might he not have returned to the flock of Jethro, his father-in-law, convinced that Pharaoh, no doubt, was a tyrant, but that his own people, being a pack of fools, deserved a tyrant and would probably have one as long as they lived? Might he not have contented himself with poking fun at the stupidities of mankind, and considered that he was, if not a valiant fellow, at least a smart one? He might, indeed; but if he had, would his name have come down through three thousand years as the greatest among leaders?

Moses the mocker would long since have become dust. Moses the reverent servant of God has become immortal.

I

There is much in the world that needs to be ridiculed—all cants and shams and hypocrisies; the pseudo-piety of the Pharisee who gives a tenth of his income to the Lord, and grinds the faces of the poor; the pseudo-patriotism of the one hundred per-center who always rises when the national anthem is sung, and attempts to pay less than the full amount of his income tax; the counterfeit courage of the "valiant defender of the faith" who is engaged in nothing more heroic than an attempt to impose on other people his own theological opinions; the tinsel valor of the bombastic defender of the nation who in time of peace wants to prepare for war and in time of war discovers any number of reasons why he himself should not don a uniform.

The capacity to ridicule sham devotion is but the reverse side of the capacity to reverence true devotion. One needs only to recall Jesus' attitude toward the Pharisee's tithe and the widow's mite to grasp the fact that ridicule and reverence may dwell in the same mind. As Carlyle puts it in his essay on Voltaire: "There are things in the world to be laughed at, as well as things to be admired, and it is no complete mind which cannot give to each sort its due."

Ridicule, moreover, is often the child of disillusionment.

What has been called the sneer method in the teaching of history represents, no doubt, an angry revolt against what Professor Harry Elmer Barnes

has called the drool method in the teaching of history—a method which might be still further characterized by such adjectives as sentimental, grandiose, egoistic, jingoistic, inaccurate. Once you have discovered that the fathers of the republic were not the miracles of wisdom or even the paragons of virtue which drooling historians have represented them to be, you feel it almost incumbent upon you to call attention to their imperfections. Indeed, you experience a kind of wild delight in announcing that the demigod had feet of clay. Incidentally, also, your own feet of clay begin to trouble you a little less.

The impatience, likewise, which many minds feel to-day with respect to patriotism is just the emotional reaction of the discovery that much which passes for patriotism is hypocrisy, the attempt of pompous persons to appear devoted without making any real sacrifice, and to appear heroic without incurring any real danger. Every now and then some one ridicules the ritual of patriotism. Why, he demands to know, should we uncover our heads whenever the flag passes; why should we rise whenever the national anthem is sung? Is such an one depraved? In most cases he is merely disillusioned. He has discovered that many persons who are most punctilious in the observance of the ritual of patriotism are, nevertheless, devoid of that sense of civic obligation which is the very essence of true patriotism.

So, also, with respect to religion and religious

observances. What seems to be irreligion is often merely the bitterness of disappointment. When Diderot makes the shocking statement that man will never be free until the last king is strangled with the entrails of the last priest, he is giving vent to the bitterness of soul produced in him by the discovery that religion in his day was but the sycophantic servant of a brutal autocracy. And it is, perhaps, only fair to suppose that the professed atheism of the present leaders of soviet Russia represents a violent, bitter repudiation of a type of religion which kept the masses of the Russian people ignorant, superstitious, unwashed, and enslaved.

But Carlyle, having acknowledged that there are things in the world to be laughed at, is careful to add that "contempt is a dangerous element to sport in; a deadly one if we habitually live in it." It is. Let a man fall into the habit of asking always and only, What is false in all this? and will he not presently fail to see what is true in all this? Let a man fall into the habit of looking always and only for something to make sport of, and will he not presently fail to discover anything that is admirable? But there are things in this world to be admired as well as things to be laughed at, and the mind that can see only what is false and never what is true, the mind that can only ridicule and never reverence is, to say the least, an incomplete mind; and, to say something else about it which really needs to be said, it is a dangerous mind.

The man who can find nothing to admire can find nothing to care for, sweat for, and greatly to live for. The man whose soul lacks reverence is a man whose life lacks incentives. The man who can discover nothing above him or about him to call forth wonder, awe, and praise is likely to discover nothing within him to give him comfort and urge him on. If such an one finds life devoid of worth, society finds him devoid of value. From the social viewpoint there is need for a man who can laugh at things which ought to be laughed at, who can satirize the foibles and follies of men, poke fun at their pious and patriotic posings, and so pierce the armor of their self-complacency and prick the bubble of their self-conceit. There is no need for the man who cannot admire what is truly admirable, who, even when he stands on holy ground, feels no impulse to remove his shoes.

Ruskin was right in saying that human progress depends on the finding of something to reverence. Where and when have men greatly lived until they have discovered at least a few things for which they were willing to die? Those commanding things give to human life its unique significance. They make it seem worth the living, even at the price which millions of men are required to pay for it. They create the will to progress. Socrates will die for truth's sake, and so truth gets a chance to be heard in the world. Jesus will die for the kingdom of heaven's sake, and so in the heart of humanity there appears a new hope.

When men find something to reverence, life begins to climb to higher levels; when they come to the conclusion that there is nothing worth dying for, they begin to wonder whether there is anything worth living for, and then the will to progress is destroyed. So, in all earnestness, to-day, one may plead for a new birth of reverence.

II

The English philosopher Martineau once declared that no man can venerate himself. According to Webster's New International Dictionary, the word venerate means "to regard with reverential respect . . . as having nobility." Was Martineau justified in saying that no man can regard himself with reverential respect, as having nobility?

Many a man, no doubt, could echo that cry of the young Isaiah, "Woe is me . . . I am a man of unclean lips;" could even, at times, make his own that cry of Job, "I despise myself." But is there any man who would willingly acknowledge that there is in him nothing that is noble?

In this connection one recalls, perhaps, certain sayings which appear in the New Testament. For instance, "The Spirit himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God; and, if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ." But sayings such as this came from the lips of men who felt, and had reason to feel, that their natures had been transformed by contact with a great purifying personality. The man

whom we are now considering is not the saint, but the average man whose hands are not altogether clean, whose heart is not altogether pure, who sometimes despises himself and has reason to do so. And what we are demanding to know is whether even this man does not recognize in himself some kind of nobility, something which differentiates him from the beasts of the field, something which relates him to God.

Herein lies the justification of self-respect. There is in every man a divine something that is entitled to respect. Woe unto the man who fails to respect that!

> "This above all: To thine own self be true,
> And it must follow, as the night the day,
> Thou canst not then be false to any man."

I am inclined to think that that is literally so. Let a man persistently reverence the highest in himself and he cannot do a crooked thing, no, nor a mean one. But let a man betray that divine something in his own soul and the way is wide open for him to run amuck.

If, however, we say to a child, "Reverence yourself," are we not in danger of encouraging him to think of himself more highly than he ought to think? Not at all, in my judgment, provided we take sufficient pains to make it clear to him what it is in himself which he ought to reverence—namely, that divine something which relates him to God. Self-respect is never self-conceit. The man who respects what is highest in him is so appalled

at what is lowest in him that he is in no danger of becoming conceited. The conceited man is one who is so blind to what is high in him that he is not disturbed by what is low in him, and is childishly pleased with his mediocre attainments.

How can a man strut before God? How can a man give himself airs in the presence of the Most High? In Jesus' unforgettable parable, the man who thanks God that he is not as other men is represented as praying thus "with himself," or, as Professor Moffatt translates, "by himself." In either case those last two words are very significant. He is "with" or "by" himself, not only in relation to his fellow worshiper, the publican, but in relation to God. His eyes are on himself, not on God. He is contemplating his own glory, not the glory of the Most High. His heart is puffed up because his face is not lifted up. You simply cannot strut before the God in your own soul. You cannot give yourself airs before the Most High in your own nature. The child who learns to reverence that divine something in his own being which relates him to the Eternal will become and remain all the days of his life a profoundly humble spirit.

Reverence the highest in thyself. Put off the shoes from off thy feet in the presence of the God in thee.

III

That divine something in every soul which justifies self-respect justifies also respect for others. If I reverence the Most High in me, ought I not

also to reverence the Most High in every other human soul?

In his famous sketch of an ideal education Goethe speaks of three essential forms of reverence which ought to be inculcated in every child—reverence for what is above us, for what is beneath us, and for what is about us. By reverence for what is above us he means respect for God, who, he says, images and reveals himself in parents, teachers, and superiors. By reverence for what is beneath us he means respect for pain and sorrow and disappointment, those earth-born experiences which are, nevertheless, so often fraught with heavenly meanings. By reverence for what is about us he means respect for our equals in society.

But now, following the direction of certain picture puzzles, let us venture to inquire: What is wrong in this? We ought, undoubtedly, to reverence God; but does God image and reveal himself only in parents, teachers, and superiors? We ought, just as undoubtedly, to reverence those about us; but are those about us only those whom we are willing to regard as our equals in society? Would not Goethe's ideal scheme of education, if consistently carried out, produce an ideal Prussian drillmaster of the old school? Respect for God, that is to say, for authority; that is to say, for parents, teachers, the emperor, and the general staff. Respect for equals in society, that is to say, for members of one's own military rank, one's own social class. What about the rest of mankind?

Would an ideal education inculcate reverence for personality only in certain persons, or would it inculcate reverence for personality in every person? For the moment, at least, let us venture to assume that there is a divine something in every human soul which is entitled to respect and then consider what logically follows.

It follows, for one thing, that we ought to respect our own children. But don't we? Is not the pertinent question just the opposite one? Do our children respect us? That is, no doubt, a pertinent question, but is it, after all, impertinent to ask whether we respect them?

You have heard, perhaps, of the father who, in selecting a Christmas gift for his son, consulted his own taste rather than his son's taste? And of that other father who, in planning a pleasant afternoon for his children, considered what would give him pleasure rather than what might give them pleasure? Someone has recently remarked that the great powers have apparently decided to treat China more liberally, even if they have to use force to do so. Would it not appear to be true of some parents that they decide occasionally to give their children a good time at whatever cost—to the children?

Nor does this habit of consulting his own likes rather than his children's likes represent the only way in which a perfectly respectable parent may fail to respect his children. Far more serious is the manifest determination of some parents that

their children shall become but second editions of themselves, reproducing their type, assuming their attitudes, accepting their views. John Ruskin owed to his mother his interest in religion and to his father his interest in art; to his parents, therefore, that peculiar combination of qualities which made of him at once a distinguished critic of art and a flaming prophet of social righteousness. But his mother tried to force upon him her own theological opinions, and his father, a well-to-do merchant, tried to force upon him his own notion of what constitutes success. When his father died, Ruskin expressed the belief that their relationship had been "an exquisite tragedy." "I am mourning," said he, "the loss of a father who would have sacrificed his life for his son, yet forced the son to sacrifice his life to him."

If it be true that there is in every child a divine something which calls for respect, does not one of the commandments for parents read, Thou shalt honor thy son and thy daughter by helping them to develop the personality that is theirs instead of trying to reproduce in them the personality that is thine?

What if there is in every woman a divine something that calls for respect?

In his essay on "Modern Gallantry," after mentioning the fact that modern men claim to be more gallant than their forebears, Charles Lamb remarks that he will believe this when, in polite circles, he shall see "the same attention paid to age as to

youth, to homely features as to handsome, to coarse complexions as to clear—to the woman as she is a woman, not as she is a beauty, a fortune, or a title." It is possible to respect women, some women, without respecting womanhood. There are men who would feel insulted if someone more frank than most of us should tell them to their faces that they are not gentlemen. Yet in sober truth, they are not always *gentle* men. They are gentle only toward the women who belong to their own social group. Toward others, especially those whom they look down upon as servants, they are not infrequently ungracious, ill-mannered, ungentlemanly, even to the point of being boorish. They are veneered gentlemen, not essential gentlemen. They respect a woman "as she is a beauty, a fortune, or a title," not as she is—a woman.

Nor, to say the whole unpleasant truth about this matter, is such ungentleness confined to men. Are there not women who respect those of their own sex who appear in their drawing room, but not those who work in their kitchen? Yet when it comes to that divine something of which we have been speaking, surely one would hesitate to conclude that it is to be found only in drawing rooms and not also in kitchens.

If only our eyes were opened, would we not see that some persons whom we regard as superior are persons whose superiority is *on* them rather than *in* them, tailor-made, not God-made? And would we not see that many persons whom we regard as

inferior are, when it comes to the undraped realities of life, probably our equals, if not our betters?

What if there is in every human life something of God? It follows, does it not, that some of us would find it difficult to justify our attitude toward persons who are undeniably human, but who happen to be colored persons?

There are some States in which a colored man, however cultivated, cannot ride in the same coach with white persons, however uncultivated. There are some colleges which a well-bred colored man would not be permitted to enter, some stores where his presence would be pointedly ignored by unbusied clerks, some theaters in which he would be coolly informed that the seats were all sold, some restaurants in which he would make the discovery that colored persons are not served. "In the morning," writes a college-bred colored woman, "I go to work by means of the subway, which is crowded. Presently, somebody gets up. The man standing in front of the vacant seat looks around, intending to point it out to a woman. I am the nearest one, but, 'Oh,' says his glance, 'you are colored; I am not expected to give it to you.' And down he plunks."

Many Americans, it appears, read the Golden Rule in this fashion: "Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them, unless, of course, they are colored men." One day Frederick Douglass came away from an interview with Abraham Lincoln in a state little short of ecstasy. "He treated me as a man," exclaimed

Douglass. "He did not let me feel for a moment that there was any difference in the color of our skins." Not always does a colored man, even though he happens to be a great man, come away from an interview with a white man in a state little short of ecstasy. In how many cases is he made to feel that he has been patronized, treated not as an intellectual equal, but as a social inferior; regarded not as a man, but as a colored man.

This situation will, of course, become more and more intolerable as increasing numbers of individuals belonging to one or another of the colored races meet all the demands of white-world culture. Not unnaturally will they feel that they have a right, an inherent, inalienable right, to be regarded and treated as persons, not as colored persons.

Are we ready, then, to take the position that an ideal education would inculcate reverence for personality, not in certain persons, but in every person? Such a position is undoubtedly a daring one. It would call for some rather drastic alterations in our minds and in our manners. But what other position could be taken by a disciple of Him who took a little child into his arms and blessed it, who sat by Jacob's Well and, in cool defiance of a cruel convention, conversed with a woman of Samaria, and who, in answer to the question, "Who is my neighbor?" told a story that named the name of every man? How can we tell whether a man is a Christian? What are the tests? Shall we ask him whether he is able to recite without mental

reservation the Apostles' Creed, shall we ask him whether he has membership in some church? I have sometimes thought that as good a test as any would be to observe the way in which he pronounces two words, the word "Negro" and the word "servant."

Put off the shoes from off thy feet in the presence of the divinity which, though ofttimes obscured, nevertheless is in every human life.

IV

Has it not now already become evident that this conviction that there is in every human life a divine something which is entitled to respect has been fostered by religion? What if no lip had ever uttered the word "God"? What if no hand had ever erected an altar? What if no head had ever been bowed in the presence of the Eternal? What if no man had ever heard or heeded a voice saying, "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground"? Where, then, were the sanctities of life?

Many people appear to think that religion is a dispensable luxury. The fact is that religion is an indispensable necessity. Even though you take the position—and nobody does take it—that physical life is the only life that really matters, how will you maintain physical life on this whirling planet, how will you keep men from destroying one another unless you convince them that human life is sacred; and how will you do that without religion? And

if you are concerned to preserve not only the body but the soul of the race, if you are concerned to preserve those loyalties which have caused men to cry out, "No, not that, I can't do that," or, again, to cry, "This must be done, or at least attempted, at whatever cost," how will you do that without religion? In the face of the contention that man is but a child of the dust, a collection of atoms, noble if an atom is noble, but no nobler, religion maintains that now is man a son of God, and it doth not yet appear what he shall be.

Religion it is which has fostered the conviction that human life is sacred. Religion it is which has developed in the souls of men a reverence for life's sanctities. So, in the presence of religion itself, ought not a man to put off the shoes from off his feet? Historic creeds he may feel unable to accept. Historic churches he may feel unable to join. But that which has produced the creeds, that which has built the churches, that which has discovered and maintained the sanctities of life—religion—surely a man ought to reverence that.

XVI

THE GREATNESS OF JESUS

Can you think of anyone who has influenced for good so many human lives as has Jesus? Again and again, an introduction to this strange Man of Nazareth has proved to be the turning point in somebody's life. It proved to be so in the case of his first disciples. For Peter, James, and John life was never the same after they had met Jesus. There were some things which they might still do, but never again without a sense of shame. There were some things which they might leave undone, but never again without the loss of self-respect.

And when you pass from the first century of Jesus' influence to the centuries that have followed, how many names stand out of men for whom life was radically changed by their contact with him! Of many of these men it may be said that their place in history is due, almost undebatedly, to their vision of Jesus. Augustine, no doubt, was by nature endowed with brilliant intellectual gifts. But is it probable that he would have influenced the thinking of a thousand years had he not come under the influence of the personality of Jesus? Dante too possessed the spark of genius, but is it probable that he would have secured for himself a seat among the immortals, had he not come under the influence

of the personality of Christ? There was, to be sure, his vision of Beatrice, but would that alone have given birth to the Divine Comedy? Had the eyes of Dante never been cleansed and illuminated by his vision of Jesus, this vision of Beatrice might have produced some exquisite lyrics of human passion, but hardly that sublime odyssey of a soul in quest of eternal truth and beauty and goodness.

In case after case, contact with Christ has awakened slumbering powers in human lives and enabled even extraordinarily gifted spirits to soar to greater heights than otherwise they would ever have reached. In century after century, it has opened men's eyes to unsuspected values, filled their hearts with dauntless hopes, and braced their wills for heroic living.

One of Jesus' contemporaries wrote concerning him, "In him was life." Is not that, also, the judgment of history? Here is a man so full of life that, although he is made to die the cruelest and most shameful of deaths, his soul goes marching on. He passes from Galilee to Macedonia, to Greece, to Rome; and a corrupt, decadent civilization feels the stirring of a new life. He enters the forests of ancient Gaul, and becomes a civilizing power. He crosses over into England; and lo, there is light. He crosses to America; and lo, there is liberty. He appears in Africa; and ancient fears fall down dead, and faith and hope and love are born. He enters the soul of Asia; and slumbering peoples open their eyes. Their young men dream dreams, their old

men see visions. There is a new conception of manhood. There is a new respect for womanhood. There is a new regard for childhood. There is a notable increase of life.

Let us consider, then, some of the elements of that amazing personality which, during nineteen centuries, has so influenced the lives of men that, as Emerson once declared, the name of Jesus is not so much written as plowed into the history of the world.

I

It is a mistake to suppose that Jesus, like Saint Francis of Assisi, was merely a great heart without a great mind. He did possess a great heart. He also possessed a great intellect.

He did not, to be sure, construct any great philosophical system. Had he done so, he would hardly have been able to hold the attention of the world as he has held it for nineteen hundred years. Intellectual systems have their day. They have their day and cease to be. They are, at best, but broken lights of eternal truth. Jesus did something vastly better than build a precarious philosophy. In the form of homely aphorisms and beautiful, trenchant parables, he gave utterance to the ethical and spiritual insights which illuminated his own soul; and in those extraordinary insights of his, men are discovering truth that was, and is, and ever shall be.

One of the most significant of Jesus' intellectual characteristics was his simplicity. He deals with

some of the profoundest themes that can engage the attention of the human mind—the nature of God, the nature of man, the nature of duty. And yet how simple he remains—so simple, indeed, that his very lucidity has concealed from many the greatness and grasp of his intellect.

There is, it appears, a very common tendency to identify obscurity with profundity, to conclude that because a book is unreadable, it must, therefore, be a very learned book; or that because a speech has contained some very big words, it must necessarily contain some very big ideas. A few persons will go away asking, "What in the world was the poor fellow driving at?" but many will say, "It was a great utterance, wasn't it?" Of the thousands of people who were present on that unforgettable day when a national cemetery was dedicated at Gettysburg, a very considerable majority believed that Edward Everett had delivered a great speech, and that the busy President had failed to rise to the height of the occasion. But which represents the profounder thinking, Edward Everett's two-hour oration or Abraham Lincoln's two-minute speech?

The fact of the matter is, of course, that it is much more difficult to say something in a few words than it is to say it in many words; much more difficult to be simple than to be "profound." "I wrote a long book," one author has candidly acknowledged, "because I hadn't time to write a short one." Would not an equal degree of candor oblige some of us to confess that we have a reputa-

tion for being profound because we have not brains enough to be simple?

Jesus had brains enough to be simple. To this it may be objected that much of his teaching was, in his own lifetime, not understood; that much of it, indeed, is even yet not understood. But why is it not understood? Is it because men cannot comprehend it, or because, perchance, they are afraid to comprehend it? "Do not lust. Do not hate. Do not return evil for evil. Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them. Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven. Seek ye first the kingdom of God." Is there anything in this teaching which is impossible, or even difficult of comprehension? Oh, to be sure, we could not take such teaching seriously and remain as we are. It would turn us inside out and our world upside down. Is not that, perhaps, the real reason why we fail to "understand" it?

A modern Jew,[1] writing of Jesus, acknowledges that "he was a great artist in parable"; that his parables are both simple and profound—"simple in form and profound in substance." Let it still further be noted that Jesus, the artist, has painted certain portraits which seem destined to hang forever in the art gallery of the mind. And he has done so with what astonishing dexterity! Thackeray painted Henry Esmond in six hundred pages; George Eliot, Adam Bede in seven hundred pages; Victor

[1] Klausner, *Jesus of Nazareth*, p. 411. The Macmillan Company, publishers.

Hugo, Jean Valjean in fifteen hundred pages. But with precisely five hundred and twenty words, in the English translation, Jesus painted the prodigal son and his elder brother; with one hundred and ninety-seven words, the priest and the Levite, and the good Samaritan; with one hundred and twenty-four words, the Pharisee and the publican. And the prodigal son who "came to himself"; the elder brother "who was angry and would not go in"; the priest and the Levite who "passed by on the other side"; the good Samaritan who was "moved with compassion"; the Pharisee who thanked God that he was "not as other men are"; and the publican who cried, "God be merciful unto me, a sinner"—how utterly real these creations of the imagination are! So real are they that we half expect to meet them, and meet them we do, on modern street corners, in modern churches and banks and offices and clubs. With less than a thousand words, Jesus, the artist, has created six characters so full of life that they have moved before the eyes of men for sixty generations, and seem likely to go on moving forever.

"Heaven and earth," said Jesus on one occasion, "shall pass away; but my words shall not pass away." Was that a foolish, unfounded boast? The Egypt of the mighty Pharaohs is gone. Assyria is gone. Babylon is gone. Imperial Rome is gone. Feudalism is gone. Mediæval theology is, if not gone, at least going. Many, also, of our most confident modern beliefs may be compelled to go,

along with some of our most firmly intrenched institutions. But the words of Jesus—"Blessed are the meek; blessed are the merciful; blessed are the pure in heart; I say unto you, Love your enemies" —is there not reason to believe that when the last dreadnaught has been scrapped as old iron and the last empire which is held together by force has collapsed like a house of cards, the words of Jesus will remain unrefuted and, indeed, irrefutable?

II

It is conceivable that some other man might have said the same things that Jesus said, and yet remained unconvincing and uninspiring. As a matter of fact, much which Jesus said had been said by others. Yet these others, save by a few special students, remain unknown; whereas the name of Jesus is on the lips of a multitude such as no man can number, out of every nation and tongue and tribe. Why? Is it not because he not merely spoke truth, but acted it?

How fearfully flat mere declamation falls. "Give me liberty, or give me death," cries the schoolboy; and his declamation may be rhetorically impeccable. Yet, somehow, it remains unconvincing. The words appear, but they are like wax figures in a museum. Only the flaming soul of a Patrick Henry could give them life. Must not we preachers sadly confess that our own words very often are like the declamation of the schoolboy? They sound well, but they are not convincing; and they

are not convincing just for the reason that they are only words. We have spoken them, but we have never acted them, we have never lived them. To talk about courage, and be a coward; to talk about humility, and be an egotist; to talk about purity, and be a secret sensualist; to talk about spirituality, and be an ecclesiastical politician—that is the foolishness and futility of preaching.

"Ideas," wrote George Eliot, "are often poor ghosts; our sun-filled eyes cannot discern them. . . . But sometimes they are made flesh. They breathe upon us with warm breath; they are clothed in a living human soul. . . . Then their presence is a power." The words of Jesus are a power to-day because they are not merely words, because we see them clothed in a living human soul. Jesus does not merely talk about courage; he dies on a cross. He does not merely talk about unselfishness; he gives his very life. He does not merely talk about forgiveness in the quiet hills of Galilee; outside the gates of Jerusalem, on a hill called The Skull, when the nails are being driven through his own hands and feet, he prays, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."

III

In an address delivered to a conference of Canadian students not long ago, Dr. Richard Roberts suggested that "when grass is growing in the streets of our proud cities, and the last plutocrat is dead and forgotten, the chief glory of this race of ours

will lie in this—that once upon a time there lived a peasant named Jesus." Why? Because this peasant of Nazareth was the incarnation of the love of God; and love, as millions to-day are ready with Henry Drummond to acknowledge, is the greatest thing in the world.

Love, for one thing, enriches the personality of the one who loves. Even Nietzsche, who never tried to be consistent, saw and acknowledged this fact. Of the man in love he says: "He seems to himself transfigured, stronger, richer, more complete; he is more complete."

And if love enriches the one who loves, it also respects the one who is loved. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differeth from another star in glory. So, also, is love. There is the love of a mother for her child, and the love of a son for his mother. There is the love of brother for sister, and the love of friend for friend. There is the love of a man for a woman, until death and beyond it. One form of love differs from another form in glory. But wherever any star appears there is light; and wherever any form of love is, there is respect for personality. The lover holds the loved one sacred.

If only love should transcend blood relationship, sex, class, nation, race, and go out in some form toward every man who is born into the world, how vastly different and vastly better our human world would be!

It has been said that love is blind. But the man who first said that was himself blind, and the people who keep on saying it are blind. The only charge which might justly be brought against love is that it is eager to see. And why should love's eagerness to see be thought to impair its ability to see? Unless a man is eager to see, he probably will not see. "Man alive!" I say, "isn't this a beautiful morning?" But he is thinking of something else. He wants to think of something else. He does not want to see anything beautiful in the morning; and to my enthusiastic question he makes some indifferent reply. Have you not sometimes found yourself saying concerning some unprepossessing individual, "I wonder what his wife sees in him"? Has it never occurred to you that perhaps the reason why she sees something in him and you do not is because she is eager to see and you are not?

It is not love that is blind. It is jealousy that is blind; it is hate that is blind. Jealousy doesn't want to see; therefore it doesn't see. Hate refuses to see; therefore, it can't see. "But love," said Emerson, "is eagle-eyed." The hands of Simon Peter smell of fish, but love sees beyond the hands a beautiful soul. The reputation of Mary Magdalene is badly tarnished, but love sees beyond the stains a nature capable of great devotion. If only we should all begin to see through the eyes of love, how much of unsuspected value we would presently discover in one another's lives!

Slowly, but surely, the world is beginning to see the futility of force—mere physical force—as a means of conquest. You can beat a boy into submission, but you cannot conquer him with a rod. He will obey you only as long as he must. You can, likewise, beat a nation into submission, but you cannot conquer it by shootings and burnings. By such methods Russia has never conquered the Poles, nor Turkey the Armenians, nor England the Irish. But England's experience in South Africa since the Boer War seems to show that you can conquer a nation with kindness.

"I saw the conquerors riding by
With cruel lips and faces wan.
Musing on kingdoms sacked and burned,
There rode the Mongol, Ghengis Khan;

"And Alexander, like a god,
Who sought to weld the world in one;
And Cæsar with his laurel wreath;
And like a thing from Hell, the Hun;

"And leading, like a star, the van,
Heedless of upstretched arm and groan,
Inscrutable Napoleon went,
Dreaming of empire, and alone. . . .

"Then all they perished from the earth,
As fleeting shadows from a glass,
And, conquering down the centuries,
Came Christ, the Swordless, on an ass."

Love knows no distinction of male and female. Is not this, perhaps, the reason why, for men and women alike, Jesus is life's ideal? There is one glory

of manhood, and another glory of womanhood. One sex differeth from another sex in glory. And he surely is no friend of the race who would seek to obliterate every and all distinction between masculinity and femininity. If ever a day shall come when men and women, instead of being complements one of the other, shall be merely repetitions one of the other, how vastly much of interest and beauty and charm will be lost to the world. Here, I suggest, is one reason why women should not smoke. But, although the two sexes are and ought to be different, both find in Jesus their ideal realized, because both find in love—the giving of self—their highest development.

Love, likewise, knows no distinction of race and race. Is not this, perhaps, the reason why all the races of mankind find their ideal in Jesus? There is one glory of the white race, and another glory of the yellow race, and another glory of the black race; for one race differeth from another race in glory. But Gandhi, the Indian, no less than Ramsay MacDonald, the Englishman, finds life's ideal in Jesus. The Master was a Jew. He was a member of a race that is famed for its exclusiveness. The Jew has been driven far away from the home of his ancestors. He has been forced to live among peoples whose language and manners and customs were greatly different from his own. But amid all his changing fortunes he has never been absorbed. It is one of the wonders of history, the way in which the Jew has retained his racial characteristics. Yet

what European ever thinks of Jesus as a Jew? What Asiatic? What African? Jesus seems to belong to no race, but rather to belong to all races, like the universal love of God.

And is it not for this self-same reason that he seems to belong, not to one age, but to all ages? There is one glory of the ancient world, and another glory of the mediæval world, and another glory of the modern world; for one age differeth from another age in glory. But who thinks of Jesus as belonging to the first century, or to the thirteenth century, or to the twentieth century? Is he not at home in every century? Whether there be Greek philosophies, they shall be done away. Whether there be mediæval pageantry, it shall pass. Whether there be modern industrial organization, it may be drastically modified. But now abideth love; and He who was love incarnate moves, and shall move, through all the centuries like the perpetual promise of the coming day.

So it is that Renan has said of him that, whatever the surprises of the future, Jesus will never be surpassed. The world has gotten beyond Rameses, Belshazzar, Attila, and Tamerlane. It has gotten beyond Cæsar, Alexander, Charlemagne, and Napoleon. It will, let us hope, get beyond the men who have merely made millions while unmaking their fellow men. But will the world ever get beyond Jesus? How can the world get beyond love?

XVII

THE COURAGE OF JESUS

JOHNSON and Boswell were once talking about public speaking. Johnson declared that he thought it more disgraceful never to try to speak than to try it and fail, "Just as," he said, "it is more disgraceful not to fight than to fight and be beaten." "Why, then," asked Boswell, "is it thought disgraceful for a man not to fight and not disgraceful not to speak in public?" Johnson's reply was, "Because there may be other reasons for a man's not speaking in public than want of resolution. He may have nothing to say. Whereas courage is reckoned the greatest of all virtues, because unless a man has that virtue, he has no security for preserving any other."

How true it is that, unless a man keeps alive in his breast the spirit of courage, every other virtue in him is in peril! Young Joseph was as clean as a hound's tooth, but had he lacked courage, he would hardly have come out of the house of Potiphar unstained. Theodore Roosevelt was an honest man, but had he lacked courage, he would hardly have come through his experience as police commissioner of New York City uncorrupted.

Courage—"unless a man has that virtue, he has no security for preserving any other." Hence the value placed upon courage in all ages and among

all peoples. Hence, also, the universal contempt for cowardice. Where is the man who would not rather be called almost anything than a coward, or the woman who would knowingly give her hand in marriage to a coward? We find it difficult to admire a man, whatever his virtues, if we discover him to be lacking in courage, and almost equally difficult to withhold admiration from a man, whatever his vices, if we discover him to be the possessor of courage. An intuition old as the race warns us that cowardice must not be tolerated. If it should be, all that man holds precious would be imperiled. If cowardice is not the greatest of vices, it is certainly one of the most dangerous. If courage is not the greatest of virtues, it is certainly one of the most essential.

When, therefore, we stand in the presence of humanity's ideal Man, we may expect to find in him an extraordinary kind of courage, and we are not disappointed. Than Jesus no braver man ever lived. There were men who called him a glutton and a winebibber; there were men who called him a heretic and a blasphemer; but the New Testament contains no mention of any man who called him a coward.

Not even his enemies could fail to see or refuse to acknowledge that he had the heart of a lion. A few weeks after his death two of his disciples were arrested. Poor, unlettered peasants they were, but they gave a good account of themselves. They acquitted themselves like men; and it is recorded

of their judges that when they beheld the boldness of Peter and John, they took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus. What was it in these two prisoners at the bar which revealed to the court their connection with Jesus? Their boldness, their magnificent courage. Not even Jesus' enemies could deny that he was brave. Indeed, one wonders whether those hard-boiled ecclesiastics did not cherish a secret admiration for the man whom they had put to death. Emerson reminds us that "the troop of Virginia infantry that had marched to guard the prison of John Brown asked leave to pay their respects to the prisoner." However great their hatred for his abolition views, however profound their horror of his ill-judged attempt to liberate the slave, they could not disguise their admiration for his heroism. So, also, the men who sent Jesus to the cross, unless their very souls were dead, must have cherished a secret respect for his stupendous courage.

I

Military courage Jesus never had an opportunity to reveal; and it is, of course, an open question whether he would ever have consented, under any circumstances, to wield a sword. But what is called physical courage he did, unquestionably, reveal when, at the earnest request of Mary and Martha, he returned to Judæa to save Lazarus. "Rabbi," expostulated his disciples, "the Jews were but now seeking to stone thee, and goest thou thither again?" He went.

Physical courage, someone says, is only an affair of the nerves. But, as a matter of fact, it is, in most cases, an affair of the whole man—his nervous system, his emotions, his ideal, his will. Some persons, it is true, are more indifferent to danger than others, partly, no doubt, because they have less imagination. They do not visualize the peril which confronts them. But when any man rushes into a burning building to save a child, or leaps into a lake to rescue an exhausted swimmer, or in any other way places his own life in jeopardy to save some other life, is his act merely an affair of the nerves? Is it not an affair, also, of his moral nature, and is it not, when all is said, a very glorious affair?

God grant that the day may never come when the commonest kind of man will hesitate for more than one natural instant to risk his life even in an apparently desperate attempt to save some other life. If such a day should come, something of infinite value would be lost to the race. It would have become a soft and pampered body without a soul.

II

In Jesus one finds, also, intellectual courage.

Of some men it may be said, not that they are intellectually brave, but only that they are intellectually brazen. The past, they appear to think, has nothing to teach them. Whatever is old is false and bad and contemptible. No novel, for instance, produced by a great Victorian is worth reading. Certainly it is not worthy to be men-

tioned in the same breath with the novels which come dripping from the pens of such modern masters as D. H. Lawrence, Sherwood Anderson, and Ben Hecht. And those great institutions which have come out of the past—what are they? The state, every state, is an instrument of tyranny; the church, every church, is a monument of superstition; the home, every home, is an hypocrisy. In the opinion of these intellectual coxcombs, the only thing to do with the past is to forget it. Jesus was not like one of them.

But neither was he like those intellectual Bourbons who appear to think that the future has nothing to reveal; that in theology, politics, and economics, at any rate, there is no need of any radical change; that the historic creeds of Christendom represent the final truth about God; that the present political organization of the United States is the last word in political philosophy; and that the present economic order could hardly be improved. Jesus was not like one of them. He was neither intellectually brazen nor intellectually bound. He was intellectually brave.

His teaching was rooted in the ideas and ideals of the great Hebrew prophets who had preceded him. Yet it was, in some respects, a new teaching. And he himself saw and said that people could no more accept his views and still cling to certain traditional views and practices than a wine merchant could pour new wine into old wine skins without causing the old skins to burst. To-day,

by many persons, teachers and preachers are warned that there are some things which must not be said, not because they are not true but merely because the saying of them might disturb somebody. Jesus clearly saw that his teaching would disturb many people, that it would, indeed, separate people like a cleaving sword. "They shall be divided, the father against son, and son against father; mother against daughter, and daughter against her mother; mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law, and daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law."[1] But did he, on that account, withhold the truth which had been revealed to him? No. "Ye shall know the truth," he said, "and the truth shall make you free."

How vast a difference between the Great Teacher and many of us who profess to be his disciples. He was not afraid of new ideas; we are. He was not bound by tradition; we are. He believed that the God who had spoken to men in former times was still speaking and would continue to speak. We sometimes act as though we believed that nothing has been heard from God since the last book found its way into the New Testament canon, or since the Council of Nicæa, or the Council of Trent, or the conference which adopted the twenty-five Articles of Religion of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Jesus was not a scientist, but he possessed in a notable degree the scientific spirit. He had all the true scientist's reverence for facts. And no scientist

[1] Luke 12. 53.

in the pursuit of truth ever revealed a sublimer courage than did Jesus of Nazareth when he stood in the presence of the upholders of tradition, the champions of orthodoxy, the saviours of the ark, and declared, "Ye have heard that it was said of old time—thus and so; but I say unto you—something different."

III

But, unquestionably, the one aspect of Jesus' courage which has most profoundly impressed the world was its moral aspect.

We know now, at least we have reason to know, that military courage is universal. It is not the possession of any one nation. The French proved themselves to be as brave as the Germans; and must we not also acknowledge that the Germans proved themselves to be as brave as the French? Nor is military courage the possession of any one race. White men, no doubt, are as courageous as yellow men; but who, with the Russo-Japanese War in mind, can refuse to acknowledge that yellow men are as brave as white? Nor can it ever again be successfully said that military courage cannot survive amid the comforts of civilization. Not after Ypres; not after Verdun; not after the Argonne! Napoleon once said that no body of men could lose more than twenty-five per cent of its fighting strength without losing its morale. In the Argonne Forest, battalion after battalion of American troops lost twenty-five per cent, fifty per cent, even sixty-six per cent, of its fighting strength and still main-

tained its morale. Men fought with courage which refused to falter after two thirds of their comrades had been stricken down. Civilization does not destroy military courage.

But something tougher, even, than military courage is needed to produce a better world. It sometimes happens that men who have enough courage to die for their country in time of war have not the courage to live for their country in time of peace. One of the military heroes of the World War ended his life, after the war, with his own hand.

It is one thing to go into battle with one's company, one's battalion, one's regiment. It is another thing to march alone, trying through all the years to be utterly loyal to some noble ideal. In the days of our youth we dream dreams and see visions —at least some of us do—dreams of a juster social order, visions of a brave and beautiful human brotherhood. But in our late thirties or early forties most of us settle down to the enjoyment of our own homes, and whatever of prosperity the years have brought, and are quite content to let the world go as it may. Now and then, to be sure, the haunting dreams return, the appealing visions reappear, and just for a day or two we experience the old madness. And that, of course, did we but know it, is our heaven-sent invitation to be young again, and divinely, deliciously happy. But we have taken unto ourselves a wife; or we have bought a field and must needs go out and see it; or we have purchased five yoke of oxen and must go to prove

them; and so, we refuse the great invitation, and settle down again and grow old.

It is sober truth to say that it requires an extraordinary kind of courage to cling, through all the years, to a great ideal. But is not that precisely the kind of courage that is needed to push the world on and up toward the sunlit heights of the city of God! That kind of courage Jesus possessed.

No man likes to be unpopular. Rather than be unpopular many a man hauls down the flag of his ideals.

Charles Kingsley once wrote an open letter to the young men of his parish which began thus:—"My dear young men: The human race may, for practical purposes, be divided into three parts—honest men who mean to do right and do it; knaves who mean to do wrong and do it; fools who mean to do whichever of the two is pleasanter. And these last may be divided into black fools and white fools—black fools who would rather do wrong than right, but dare not unless it is the fashion; white fools who would rather do right than wrong, but dare not unless it is the fashion."

How many of these white fools there are in our world; and by no means all of them are youngsters! In high schools, to be sure, and colleges, there are hundreds of young persons who would rather do right than wrong, but dare not unless it is the fashion. And one wishes, of course, that they had a little more backbone. But it is hard at sixteen, at twenty-one, to be unpopular. When rich red

blood is racing through one's veins, and one begins to feel the mysterious urge of the great life forces, and the desire for sympathetic understanding becomes as hunger, and the longing for love becomes as pain, it is hard to stand alone. What is particularly annoying is to see persons twenty years older, married and with children of their own, who, nevertheless, have not enough courage to stand for anything, however desirable, which happens to be unpopular; who would rather do right than wrong, but dare not unless it is the fashion; who believe, for instance, in prohibition, yet lack the courage to refuse a glass of illegal liquor when it is offered to them by a smiling host or gracious hostess.

Consider, then, the courage of Jesus, who saw his great congregation dwindle from five thousand to twelve, and even those twelve become so disaffected toward him that he one day felt constrained to ask, "Will ye also go away?" but who resolutely refused to surrender his ideal.

No man likes to lose his good name.

"Who steals my purse steals trash; 'tis something, nothing;
'Twas mine, 'tis his, and has been slave to thousands;
But he that filches from me my good name
Robs me of that which not enriches him,
And makes me poor indeed."

But in utter loyalty to a great ideal, Jesus made himself of no reputation. A profoundly spiritual man, he was called a glutton and a winebibber. A thoroughly reverent man, he was branded a

blasphemer. A perfectly loyal man, he was accused of treason. An advocate of long-suffering patience and good will, he was charged with the encouragement of violence—as has been almost every other great idealist during the last nineteen hundred years. (Even to-day there are persons who cannot distinguish between opposition to compulsory military training and the desire to wreck the government of the United States.) Jesus grew up among his townspeople in Nazareth with a spotless reputation, but dared to lose even that rather than surrender his ideals.

No man likes to disappoint his friends. Far more difficult, oftentimes, than to refuse the demands of one's enemies is to refuse the requests of one's friends. Jesus had courage enough to resist the ill-judged importunities of his friends. When he permitted that rich young ruler to go sorrowfully away with all his money, Jesus' friends were full of consternation—as what board of trustees in church or college even to-day would not be! Not long ago a college president told me that he had just refused a gift of one hundred thousand dollars from a man who aspired to a position on his board of trustees, but who was manifestly unfit for it. But the college president to-day who will refuse a proffered gift, under whatever conditions, is a rare bird, isn't he? He is entitled to receive a Carnegie medal for extraordinary heroism; but if his board of trustees discovers what he has done, it is hardly a medal that he is likely to get.

Not even to please his friends would Jesus compromise his cause.

No truly sincere man enjoys the thought of martyrdom. The desire for martyrdom is due to a morbid self-conceit. Your would-be martyr would rather die than live unnoticed. He has such a passion for publicity that he would rather go to jail than never see his name in the newspapers. He is a born hero-worshiper, and the hero whom he worships most is himself. He is as anxious to appear heroic as any screen idol who loves to wear a soldier's uniform—in pictures. And when, at last, he succeeds in his somewhat theatrical attempt to get himself crucified, his question is not, What will people now say of my cause? but only, What will people now say about me?

A would-be martyr Jesus was not. He did all he honorably could to avoid martyrdom. But a day finally came when he believed that he ought to force the issue in the capital of his country; that he ought to deliver his message where his whole nation could not fail to hear it. So he set his face like a flint to go to Jerusalem, having at least some idea of what awaited him there. When the storm broke he was not unprepared for it. But it is one thing to form an heroic resolution, and another thing to go through with it. The night before his crucifixion found him in an olive grove, sweating blood. What was to come of his sacrifice? Would anything come of it? Everything now depended upon the little group of uninfluential persons who

had been traveling about with him. But one of them already had betrayed him, and in his heart he knew that when the blow descended the rest would desert him. Would they ever come back? Would anyone carry on after his death; or would the torch which he had lighted go out forever? He sweat, as it were, great drops of blood.

But human progress depends upon what? It seems to depend upon some man's ability to stand in the present and see into the future; upon some man's resolution to stake everything on the truth that he sees, not knowing whether it will eventually triumph, but daring to believe that it will. "Father, if this cup cannot pass away except I drink it, thy will be done." There, surely, is history's supreme instance of courage.

IV

What were the sources from which Jesus derived his courage? One of them, I should say, was love. A friend of mine once told me that during a hunting expedition in Africa he one day shot a gorilla, and then despised himself when he saw two other members of the group stop suddenly in their flight and quite deliberately, at the risk of their own lives, come back and carry off their wounded comrade. Even in the animal world, love casteth out all fear.

Another source of Jesus' courage is, I suspect, revealed in that unforgettable saying, "Be not afraid of them that kill the body, but are not able

to kill the soul: but rather fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."[1] The fear of God is not only the beginning of wisdom, it is the beginning of courage. Most of us do fear the face of man. We fear not only those who can kill the body, but those also who can torture the spirit. Is there any fear that can drive away this fear of man? Yes, the fear of God. "The way to success," said Woodrow Wilson, "is to show that you are not afraid of anybody except God and his final verdict." People who do fear God and his final verdict do not fear the face of man.

But the ultimate source of Jesus' courage was, undoubtedly, his religious faith. One of the most amazing scenes in all history is the meeting of Pilate and Christ; the one clothed in all the trappings of place and power, the other in a peasant's tunic; the one supported by imperial Rome, the other by nobody—his church against him, his nation against him, his own disciples run away from him like cowards before a battle. Yet, wonder of wonders, it is the judge who is flustered and the prisoner who is serene. Why?

Is there not the suggestion of an answer in that famous question which the one put and the other made no attempt to answer? When Jesus remarked, "To this end have I been born, and to this end have I come into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Everyone that is of the truth heareth my voice," Pilate asked, "*What is*

[1] Margin, Gehenna.

truth?" A Russian painter has immortalized in art the dramatic moment when this question was put. His canvas presents just those two human figures, the procurator and the prisoner, but they are drawn with such astonishing insight that when the painting was first exhibited in Russia, it created a sensation. Tolstoy wrote of it, "That fat, shaven neck of the Roman governor, that half-turned, large, well-fed, sensuous body, that outstretched arm with its gesture of contempt—it is alive!" Tolstoy used the adjective "half-turned" because the artist has represented Pilate in the act of turning away from his haggard-faced prisoner, convinced that Jesus is innocent and, also, that he is a fool.

What is truth? Pilate did not know, did not believe that anyone knew or would ever know. Pilate did not believe in truth, which is another way of saying that he did not believe in God. For Pilate there was no world except this world, no kingdom except a temporal kingdom, no power except military power, no realities except visible, tangible realities. And in that awful hour when one of the most momentous events of all time was being enacted, it was Pilate, the man without religious faith, who played the coward. It was Jesus, who "trusted on God," who went to a cross unafraid.

XVIII

A MAN'S REWARD

In many Indian tribes it used to be the custom to punish young offenders by exposing them to public ridicule, and it is said that in most cases one such exposure was all that was needed to bring the youthful culprit back to normalcy. He would rather have suffered death by torture at the hands of an enemy tribe than face again the condemnation of his own tribe.

In the summer of 1902 the coal miners of Pennsylvania refused to dig another ton of coal until the operators had met their demands. A few months later, when the leaves began to fall and the nights and mornings became chill, the American people began to realize that they were in imminent danger of a coal famine. So serious did the situation appear that the President of the United States, although he had no legal authority to do so, ventured to intervene. He invited representatives both of the operators and of the miners to confer with him at the White House. When they came, he urged them to settle their dispute as quickly as possible by arbitration in order that the country might be saved from needless suffering. To this proposal the miners agreed; the owners, however, stubbornly insisted that they had nothing to arbi-

trate. Whereupon, Mr. Roosevelt submitted his proposal to the nation; and when the nation, with astonishing swiftness and unanimity, demanded arbitration, the gentlemen who had insisted that they had nothing to arbitrate suddenly discovered that they could arbitrate—and did. American coal barons were no more able than American Indians to face the condemnation of the entire tribe.

To-day, many persons view with regret the repeated demands of the German people that the question of war guilt shall be re-examined. They contend that the question which ought to be considered now is not, Who made the war? but, How may we all make a just and lasting peace? But is not this reiterated German demand an illustration of the fact that people, generally speaking, cannot endure to face the condemnation of the world? Looked at from the German viewpoint, it represented also, of course, a demand for justice; and I, for my part, do not hesitate to affirm that it is a demand for justice, for I consider that the convenient war-time notion of the sole guilt of the German nation, or, indeed, of any nation, has been exploded by the evidence which has since come to light. But what I am concerned to point out now is just the fact that it requires either an extraordinary degree of moral callousness or an extraordinary degree of moral courage to face with equanimity the condemnation of one's world.

Is there not a suggestion here for the future? A nation, even a government, will think twice before

it risks the moral disapproval of mankind. If, therefore, there were some tribunal, a World Court or League of Nations, through which world sentiment could become articulate, would not a very effective instrument be provided for the securing, on the part of all governments, of a decent respect for international law, and a considerate regard for the conscience of mankind?

Consider, likewise, the power of praise. Parents have discovered that there are two methods of bringing up a child in the way he should go. One is to reprove him when he does something wrong. The other is to praise him when he does something right. Perhaps it is going a bit too far to say that all parents have made this discovery. One suspects that there are, even yet, occasional fathers, and even mothers, whose one method of conducting the moral education of their children is to come down on them hard whenever they disobey, which may or may not be the same as saying whenever they do something wrong. But many parents certainly have made the discovery that to say to a boy, "I am proud of you" whenever he does something praiseworthy, is quite as effectual a means of securing his moral development as to say to him, "You ought to be punished" every time he does something blameworthy.

Has not society as a whole made the discovery that praise, no less than blame, is an effective method of securing in its members those moral characteristics which it deems desirable? Nietzsche

believed that the early Christians were guilty of a deep and dark plot against the principalities and powers of the world. Belonging for the most part to the peasant class, many of them, in fact, being slaves, they themselves were required to cultivate such qualities as meekness, and patience, and forbearance, and forgiveness. So what did they do? Why, these astonishingly clever and unscrupulous people began to hold up for general emulation those peculiar qualities which they themselves, in virtue of their servile position, were obliged to cultivate, with the result that what in the beginning of the Christian era was considered to be the mark of an inferior man came eventually to be regarded as the mark of a superior man. The stigmata of the slave became the halo of the saint. In this way, Nietzsche thought, the early Christians plotted and secured a gigantic revenge, turned completely the social tables, humbled the mighty and exalted the weak. All of which would have sounded most interesting to Peter and James and John, not to mention Saint Paul!

As an analysis of early Christian motive and purpose, Nietzsche's statement is, of course, perfectly absurd, and yet how suggestive of the way in which social groups have secured the enthronement of certain ideals! Once, even in our Western world, that noble law of the sea, "Women and children first," would on sea or land have excited wonder, if not contempt. To-day it is universally approved. Why? Once, particularly in our Western

world, men whom nothing could have induced to strike a woman did not hesitate on occasion to strike a child. Was it not written, "Spare the rod and spoil the child"? To-day the man who strikes a child, even though it does happen to be his own child, finds it a bit difficult to hold on to his self-respect. Why? Once men were ashamed to forgive. To-day they are ashamed not to forgive; or if that, perchance, is saying too much, still it may be said that, more and more, forgiveness is gaining the respect, and revenge the disrespect, of the world. Why? To none of these questions may any single answer be given. But will not the answers which must be given include the fact that such qualities as chivalry and magnanimity have long been applauded by the forward-looking portion of mankind?

This fact really ought to prove embarrassing to those congenital pessimists who feel called to remind us that, human nature being what it is, there is very little that can be done for the world. Human nature being what it is, it is entirely possible to secure the enthronement of any ideal, provided only that men will begin to condemn those who disregard it and to applaud those who honor it. Applaud your warmakers, and you will have war. Applaud your peacemakers, and you will have peace. Applaud the sentiment, "In business for profit," and the multitude of men will see nothing wrong in seeking first their own interests. Applaud the sentiment, "In business for service," and in-

creasing numbers of men will begin to seek first the kingdom of God.

The stanchest of men enjoys the good opinion of his fellows and dreads their condemnation. In praise and blame, therefore, social groups have found effective means of securing the kind of conduct they desire. And when to praise they have added certain other forms of reward—a handful of silver to put in one's purse, a ribbon to stick in one's coat—and when to blame they have added certain other forms of punishment—imprisonment, torture, death—they have, no doubt, been even more successful in securing the kind of conduct they desired.

But consider, now, another fact. Praise and blame, rewards and punishments, have been not only a means of achieving progress, but a means of blocking it, or at least of delaying it. In his essay on "The Character of Dogs," Robert Louis Stevenson declares that the dog's passion for consideration has betrayed him into a satellite position as the friend of man. The cat, he says, preserves her independence, but the dog, with one eye ever on the audience, has been wheedled into slavery and praised and petted into a renunciation of his nature. Might it not also be said of many a man that he has been wheedled into slavery, praised and petted into a renunciation of his ideals? Some men can stand apparent failure; what they cannot stand is apparent success. In the face of opposition they remain as immovable as Gibraltar; but let influential persons begin to praise them, and they

become as putty in their hands. Other men can stand apparent success, are not deceived by it nor satisfied with it; but apparent failure, universal criticism, or universal indifference—that causes them to throw up their hands in despair. And just that, or something very similar to that, has been the lot of most men who have done any of the needed pioneering work of the world.

When Lord Shaftesbury set himself to the task of arousing the conscience of England with respect to the horrors involved in the employing of children twelve hours a day in mills and mines, and of securing legislation that would put an end to them, was he universally praised? On the contrary, he was at the start almost universally condemned in the social group to which he himself belonged. If he had been the sort of man whose conduct is entirely shaped by public opinion, "the cry of the children" would have remained still longer unheard.

I

Let us, therefore, consider this whole matter of a man's reward from the point of view of One who has been described as the Pioneer of Life.

It is interesting to note that Jesus frankly recognizes not only the power but the legitimacy of rewards as incentives to heroic conduct. He does not ask his disciples to live and labor without hope of reward. Even when he asks them to surrender much which the world prizes he is careful to add that great shall be their reward. The rich young

ruler is told that if he goes and sells whatsoever he has and gives to the poor, he will have treasure in heaven. Peter is assured that there is no man who has left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or children, or lands for the gospel's sake but he shall reap an hundredfold, now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands. Recall, also, the saying, "Blessed are ye when *men* shall reproach you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven."

But notice, now, certain facts about the nature of the reward which Jesus urged men to seek after. He made it abundantly clear that the reward of which he was thinking was not the praise of men: When you give alms, do not sound a trumpet that you may have glory of men; when you pray, do not stand on the street corner that you may be heard of men; when you fast, do not disfigure your face that you may be seen of men. This message from his lips he illustrated and enforced by his life. He himself did not live for praise. When he got it, he appreciated it, provided only that it represented a real understanding of what he was after. When he failed to get it, he did not go about with the air of one who seems to be exclaiming, "How strange it is that more people do not suspect me of greatness!" How significant the fact that when he died his ears were assailed by mocking laughter and bitter curses. Would you rightly appraise the

praise of men? Consider that stark cross on the skull-shaped hill outside the city gates, where the noblest life that was ever lived went out in a storm of human hisses.

What, then, was the reward which Jesus urged men to seek after? Was it not, for one thing, the reward which is inherent in the pursuit of truth, the enjoyment of beauty, and the doing of righteousness? When you give, do not let your left hand know what your right hand does. When you pray, go into your own room and close the door. When you fast, anoint your head and wash your face. Then your Father who is in secret will recompense you; then you will find the reward that is inherent in such conduct—the kind of reward that is so tragically missed by persons whose only concern is the praise of their fellows. The man who gives to have glory of men, the man who prays to be heard of men, the man who fasts to be seen of men —"Well," says Jesus, with unmistakable irony, "he has his reward." But the cheap reward which he does get makes impossible the far greater reward which he might have gotten had he given, or prayed, or fasted without any thought of the possible audience.

The danger of extraneous rewards always is that they will prevent the discovery of those intrinsic rewards which are so much more to be desired. In some of those old-fashioned Sunday schools whose superintendents were apparently more concerned about attendance than about something

worth attending to, prizes were given to ambitious children whose records showed that for one whole year they had not been absent on a single Sunday. I have in my possession now a book which I received for such an achievement, but looking back, I am not at all sure that this book has ever really profited me anything. I distinctly recall that my one concern at the time was to get it, and I had my reward. But how worthless it was compared to the reward which would have been mine had I really learned something that year in the Sunday school!

Many of our American colleges and universities offer as a reward for intellectual distinction election to membership in a national honorary society known as Phi Beta Kappa. But it is, unfortunately, entirely possible for a student to obtain a Phi Beta Kappa key without attaining intellectual distinction. He may, for instance, fill up his schedule with a number of easy courses which offer the chance of a high grade, and neglect, thereby, a number of important courses which involve the risk of a low grade. He may also become a kind of human parrot and make, time after time, a perfect recitation without ever developing any capacity for creative thinking; in which case he may obtain a Phi Beta Kappa key, but hardly intellectual distinction. At the end of four years he will have his reward, but his membership in Phi Beta Kappa, obtained under such circumstances, will have secured his exclusion from the society of those who have

qualified themselves to do the creative work of the world.

The reward which Jesus urged men to seek was something intrinsic, not something extrinsic; or, to state somewhat differently the essential nature of it, it was the reward of an increased capacity. "Thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will set thee over many things." The real reward of the athlete, what is it? Athletic honors? No, an increase of physical strength. The real reward of the scholar, what is it? Scholastic honors? No, an increase of intellectual power. The real reward of the public servant, what is it? Wealth, fame? No, the ability to render a still larger service.

"Glory of warrior, glory of orator, glory of song,
Paid by a voice flying by to be lost in an endless sea—
Glory of virtue to fight, to struggle, to right the wrong—
Nay, but she aimed not at glory, no lover of glory she:
Give her the glory of going on and still to be."

The glory of a strong man who discovers that he is equal to increasing strains; the glory of an intelligent man who discovers that he is equal to increasing responsibilities; the glory of an unselfish man who discovers that he is equal to increasing opportunities to serve his fellows; the glory of going on and still to be—is not that the reward which Jesus urged men to seek?

II

Saint Paul once said of Jewish law, that whole system of regulations and prohibitions under which he was brought up, that it was a schoolmaster lead-

ing men to Christ. Might it not be said also of praise and blame, and of all extraneous rewards and punishments, that their legitimate function is that of a schoolmaster leading men up to the point where life's supreme values will make their own appeal? The time has not yet come—it may never come—when society can afford to dispense altogether with rewards and punishments as moral incentives. There is, no doubt, a very considerable number of persons who are still in the kindergarten stage of moral development. Benjamin Franklin observed that few men in public affairs act from the mere view of the good of their country—a statement which will hardly be challenged even now by a citizen of Franklin's State or of ours. But do we not all wish that more men would be found in political life who would act from a mere view of the good of their country, and find their own reward in seeking their country's good? Do we not all wish that increasing thousands of young men would respond to that noble suggestion of the aged Pasteur: "Say to yourself, first, 'What have I done for my institution?' and, as you gradually advance, 'What have I done for my country?' until the time comes when you may have the immense happiness of thinking that you have contributed in some way to the progress and good of humanity"? Surely it is as plain as a pikestaff that society needs to produce in every generation at least a few men who will be willing to serve it with or without public acclaim, with or without material reward.

In a story which I read not long ago a young assistant professor of chemistry is offered a position as commercial chemist at five thousand dollars a year, plus a bonus, to begin with, and all sorts of dazzling inducements for the year after next. As he thinks of his brave young wife spoiling her hands in daily dishwaters, he is sorely tempted to close with the offer. He has dreamed, to be sure, of doing less remunerative but more rewarding work—trailing to their still hidden lairs the germs of baffling diseases, making, perhaps, some new discovery that will benefit millions of people yet unborn. Still, as he considers the attractiveness of life on the scale of five thousand a year and upward, he is sorely tempted. Finally, however, he decides to turn it down. The friend who has offered him the position is utterly unable to understand the reason for this decision. "What, stick to a professor's job and a professor's salary when one might be getting three times as much?" The assistant professor scratched his head perplexedly. How could he make this other man comprehend his own point of view? Presently he said: "Here is a thought. It is far-fetched, maybe, but here it is. Suppose when Christ got his big idea he had looked at it with the cool eyes of a modern business man. He must have known that it wasn't going to be a popular idea and that, if he pushed it, he was going to get into a lot of trouble. Well, what made him go on with it?"

That is a question worth considering. What did make him go on with it? Praise? No, men

reviled him. Some kind of extraneous reward? No, men nailed him to a cross. Yet in view of what Jesus said to his disciples about the reward that was waiting for them, we are, no doubt, entitled to suppose that he himself must have been influenced by the hope of some kind of reward. What, then, did make him go on with it? Was it not the joy that is inherent in any kind of creative activity, the joy which the poet finds when he produces an immortal poem, the joy which the musician finds when he produces an immortal symphony, the joy which the scientist finds when he discovers some new domain of truth, the joy which the prophet finds when, notwithstanding the jeers of his contemporaries, he hears from far away the laughter of little children whom his vision has blessed, and the prayers of countless thousands whom the truth in him has delivered from needless fears and preventable miseries?

Yes, someone may say, but what about that multitude of men who are not, nor ever can be, great poets, or prophets, musicians, or scientists? Were it possible to do so, they too might find life's supreme reward in creative activity, but under the circumstances, must they not be content with those lesser rewards which you have been all along decrying? To this question an answer may be given in that significant saying of Jesus, "He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward: and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive

a righteous man's reward. And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only, in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward."

The power to create may be denied us, but the power to appreciate—is not that within the grasp of each of us? Browning makes his Cleon say:

> "I have not chanted verse like Homer, no—
> Nor swept string like Terpander, no—nor carved
> And painted men like Phidias and his friend:
> I am not great as they are, point by point.
> But I have entered into sympathy
> With these four, running these into one soul,
> Who, separate, ignored each other's art.
> Say, is it nothing that I know them all?"

Even though we cannot create art, is it nothing that we can appreciate it? Even though we cannot create music, is it nothing that we can enjoy it? Even though we cannot be a prophet, is it nothing that we are able to recognize one when we see him? Nor is it only the power of appreciation that remains to us. He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet helps to get that prophet a hearing. He that receiveth an artist in the name of an artist helps to promote an interest in art. Even though we ourselves cannot create those higher values which are born in the prophet's vision, the artist's skill, we can, by our appreciation of them, help others to recognize them and so have our own share in the gradual enlightenment and enrichment of mankind.

XIX

THE CREATIVE LIFE

One day when Huxley was advertised to speak before the British Association in Dublin, he arrived late at the station, jumped into a cab, and had just enough breath to say, "Drive fast." Away went the cab, jolting over the streets, until its occupant, becoming anxious, inquired, "Do you know where we are going?" The driver answered, "No, I don't know where we are going, but I am driving fast."

Must we not now acknowledge that that was pretty nearly true of Western civilization twenty years ago? We did not know where we were going, but we were driving fast! To-day, the more thoughtful among us are beginning to wonder where we are going. They are more concerned about our destination than they are about our speed; and some of them are beginning to suspect that we are headed straight for disaster if we do not change our direction. There is, in fact, a growing agreement among thoughtful persons that civilization has taken a wrong turn, and that nothing under heaven can save it from wreck and ruin if it keeps on going in the direction in which it is now headed.

A world court is a noble conception; but it will not save us if it merely undertakes to formulate

the rules under which we shall continue our present struggle for political power and economic dominion. A league of nations is an even more noble conception; but it will not save us if it merely undertakes to secure the consolidation of past injustice and the maintenance of present gains. No mere reorganization of our present passions will avail. It is not merely a new world organization that we need; it is a new world direction.

Considering the world as a whole to-day, would you not say that there is probably more of fear in it than of hope? Why? Is it not because we are, most of us, seeking to possess something rather than to produce something? We are, therefore, full of fear lest we shall not be allowed to possess all that we would like to possess, or lest what we do possess may be taken away from us. If we have little, we see "red." If we have much, we see "Reds," with bombs in their hands, waiting for a propitious moment to blow up the order by which we have profited.

This fear is not confined to individuals. It colors the councils of nations. Is there any nation in the world to-day that is not haunted by the fear that some bit of economic dominion which it desires for itself may be snatched away from it? Both as individuals and as nations we are tormented by the thought that the cake may be eaten up before we have a chance to get a piece of it. Of the possessive life fear is born and, late or soon, strife.

But just suppose for one exciting moment that

exactly the opposite of this situation were true—that we were, most of us, seeking to create something and not merely to possess something. Would there not soon be such an increase in production as would make it possible for millions of people to secure the physical equipment of a happy life, a life set free from economic fear? The mass of mankind would no longer need to be anxious, saying, "What shall we eat, what shall we drink, wherewithal shall we be clothed?" There would be enough to go around, and a general willingness that it should go around, for men's governing motive would be, not a lust to possess, but a passion to create. A civilization produced by men and women most of whom are eager only to possess something is, in the judgment of its most intelligent observers, headed straight for disaster. But a civilization produced by men and women most of whom were eager to create something—an artistic civilization rather than a materialistic civilization—would it not be the very world of prophetic dreams?

I

It is interesting to note that the Bible begins and ends with the thought of creation. In Genesis, a world is being formed; in Revelation, it is being re-formed. In the opening chapters God is creating the heavens and the earth; in the closing chapters he is creating a new heaven and a new earth. At the beginning of the story we are told that God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it

was very good. Yes, but evidently it was not good enough; for at the end of the story we hear a voice from heaven saying, "Behold, I make all things anew." And at the very heart of the story we hear a great creative spirit saying to his little handful of faithful disciples, "In the world ye have tribulation; but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world;" and we follow him to a cross, where he dies in awful agony, but sets in motion spiritual forces which are, slowly but surely, recreating the world.

The world to which the Bible, no less than modern science, introduces us, is not made, but in the making. It is a world in which ever new and nobler forms of life may be expected.

II

Many of us, moreover, are learning to rejoice in the fact that the world is still in the making. At the famous Assembly Grounds on the beautiful shores of Lake Chautauqua, William James found "sobriety and industry, intelligence and goodness, orderliness and ideality, prosperity and cheerfulness." He found a college in full blast, a chorus of seven hundred voices, splendidly conducted religious services, and a perpetually running soda fountain. He found no diseases, no poverty, no drunkenness, no crime, no flies, nor mosquitoes, nor policemen—only culture and comfort. But when he emerged into "the dark and wicked world" again, he found himself involuntarily saying, "Ouf!

what a relief!" And when he had time to analyze this strange experience, he accounted for it by saying that at Lake Chautauqua there were "no racks, even in the place's historical museum; and no sweat except possibly the gentle moisture upon the brow of some lecturer"; no "heights and depths," no "precipices and steep ideals," no struggle or striving—nothing to work for, fight for, die for.

There is so much more fun to be had in creating something than there is in merely possessing something. Watch any child building a house with toy blocks—foundations, walls, doors, windows, roof, chimney. What a wonderful time he is having! But when the last block has been put in its place, bang! down comes the house. The fun was in the building. How stupid we are not to see that the fun always is in the building! I often think of those poor little rich children who have all their toys bought for them at Marshall Field's, and I pity them. My mind runs back to the days when some of us shaped bats out of fence rails, made balls out of pieces of cord and rubber bands, manufactured wagons out of discarded wheels and soap boxes, built playhouses with whatever materials happened to be at hand, and were so completely, absorbedly happy that even a summons to dinner was an unwelcome sound.

Is there not something very significant in those secret carpenters' benches that some of us still keep in our basements, and those clandestine picture-developing outfits which we keep in our

attics, and those homemade radio sets on which we spend so many strangely happy hours and which always reproduce so very much better than any purchased set can possibly do? Is there not, I ask, something significant in all this—and just a little pathetic too? For does it not, in many cases, reveal a life whose creative impulse, denied an outlet during working hours, has sought at least a partial satisfaction when the day's work was over? The pathos, of course, is not in the fact that the creative urge does find partial satisfaction in some avocation, but, rather, in the fact that it is denied expression in the serious business of life. A man's happiness, no less than a child's happiness, lies not in possessing something, but, rather, in creating something.

III

And is not the creative impulse one of the very strongest impulses to which human beings respond? Not long ago an American "captain of industry" remarked, "Say what you will, it is the profit motive that makes the wheels of the world go round." Please distinguish at this point between the profit motive and profit. A reasonable profit is, in my judgment, entirely legitimate. Without it an industry could not expand. Could it even keep alive? But the profit *motive*, going into business *for the sake of profit*—is that legitimate? This "captain of industry" implies that it is. Well, it would, I think, be an interesting exercise to consider his statement in the light of certain chapters

in American history. Consider it first in relation to the coming of the Pilgrims: Say what you will, it was the profit motive that brought the Mayflower to these shores. Consider it next in relation to the Declaration of Independence: Say what you will, it was the profit motive that caused Josiah Quincy to exclaim, "Blandishments will not fascinate us, nor will threats of halters intimidate us; for, under God, we are determined that wheresoever, whensoever, howsoever we shall be called on to make our exit, we will die free men." Consider it likewise in relation to that epic movement which liberated four millions of Negro slaves: Say what you will, it was the profit motive which led William Lloyd Garrison to write, "I will not equivocate; I will not excuse; I will not retreat a single inch, and I will be heard." How vast and vital a part the profit motive has played in those particular episodes in American history on which "one-hundred per-cent Americans" love to dwell!

It would, I think, be an equally interesting exercise to call, in the light of this statement, the names of the world's greatest poets and musicians and artists and inventors and teachers. Say what you will, it was the profit motive that led John Milton to write *Paradise Lost*. He received, to be sure, only ten pounds for it; but the poor beggar was glad enough to get even that much for it, no doubt. Say what you will, it was the profit motive that caused Schubert to compose his priceless songs and sell them for ten pence apiece. And Victor Her-

bert, who died the other day leaving a magnificent fortune of thirty-five thousand dollars—he too was inspired by the profit motive. And Charles P. Steinmetz, who left an equally magnificent fortune of twenty-five thousand dollars, was moved only by the profit motive. And Cezanne, who faced "indifference, slander, folly, prejudice, and a total lack of comprehension of what he was, of what he desired," in order to paint life as he saw it—he likewise was influenced by the profit motive. And that distinguished teacher who said, "Harvard University pays me for what I would gladly pay for the privilege of doing if I could afford it"—what a stranglehold the profit motive had on him!

Is it only the profit motive that makes the wheels of the world go round? Ask Benedict Spinoza, "grinding lenses and refusing largesses" in order that he may be free to devote himself to the pursuit of truth. Ask Thomas Carlyle, eking out a precarious existence on a bleak Scottish moor in order that he may be free to talk to his generation like a great Hebrew prophet. Ask Ralph Waldo Emerson, living on an income of about a thousand dollars a year in order that he may be free to write essays which have led President Eliot to list him among the ten greatest men of the last two hundred years. Ask David Livingstone, honored by every great scientific society in Europe, but returning to the poverty and loneliness of Central Africa. Ask Albert Schweitzer, the brilliant author of important theological treatises and the greatest living

expounder and interpreter of Bach, who, with all the comfort and culture of Europe bidding him stay, has returned to Africa to resume his practice as a medical missionary. Ask Mahatma Gandhi, who surrendered, in South Africa, an income of twenty-five thousand dollars a year in order that he might be free to devote himself to the political and spiritual enfranchisement of his people, and who to-day is living the simplest imaginable life in order that he may continue to be untrammeled.

How true it is that murder will out! The man who insists, "Say what you will, it is the profit motive that makes the wheels of the world go round," reveals the motive which makes him go round—the sordidness and secularity of his own soul. But how ignorant he is of the source from which a multitude of men derive their motive power! What has financial profit to do with any mother who goes into the valley of the shadow of death to give birth to her son? Or with any artist who paints because he feels a divine, irresistible urge to paint? Or with any musician who could no more refuse expression to the haunting harmonies of his soul than a woman in the pangs of childbirth could refuse life to her child? Or with any teacher whose classroom becomes a holy of holies in which, day after day, he meets God in creative processes? Or with thousands upon thousands of very ordinary men who work, not merely to make a living, but to live?

Say what you will, it is not only the profit mo-

tive that makes the wheels of the world go round. And because it is not, because the creative impulse is, in most men, even stronger than the possessive impulse, we may dare to hope that civilization may yet be caused to change its course from a path which leads to destruction to a path which leads to prosperity and peace.

IV

Great, to-day, is the need of creative thinking. There was once a time when the only human reality was a brutish reality—the day of the real cave man and the real cave woman; not brutal persons like those modern degenerates who specialize in what is called "cave-man stuff," but brutish persons who tore their meat with their hands, and ate it raw, and never so much as dreamed of those splendid spiritual achievements which are now the shining heritage of the race. In that dim and distant day the only human reality in all the world was a brutish reality. But something very wonderful happened: *a creative thinker appeared.* And, no doubt, he died an unnatural death. That seems to be the perennial fate of creative thinkers. But he saw, through the eyes of a creative imagination, a somewhat nobler kind of life; and, by and by, men began to act upon some of his suggestions—the sons of the sons of those who stoned him. And so, and so, the race has advanced.

Somebody dreamed of trial by jury rather than by torture in a day when "safe-and-sane" people believed that the suggestion of people being tried

otherwise than by torture smacked of socialism, if not of Bolshevism. Somebody dreamed of religious freedom, when no man was free to worship God in accordance with the dictates of his own conscience. Somebody dreamed of government through representatives chosen by the people rather than a hereditary monarch. Somebody dreamed of a free public school. Somebody dreamed of the abolition of slavery. Somebody dreamed of the abolition of the liquor traffic. And now, how necessary it is that such creative thinking should go on. Somebody must dream of a social order in which the present extremes of wealth and poverty shall no longer exist. Somebody must dream of an industrial order in which child labor shall be no more. Somebody must dream of a world order in which international disputes shall be settled, not by conflict, but by conference. Somebody must see through the eyes of a creative imagination certain splendid human realities which have, as yet, no existence save in the dreams of prophetic spirits and in the mighty purpose of God.

This leads me to suggest that education itself needs to be revisualized. What is education? The very best definition I have ever heard is that "education is the continuous refashioning of life in accordance with ever nobler patterns." But in how many schools and colleges to-day is education merely a molding of life in accordance with existing patterns! It is teaching young people *what* to think rather than *how* to think. And a generation that

has merely been taught *what* to think will go out and reproduce the mistakes of its teachers; but a generation which had been taught *how* to think might go out and begin to create a better world.

V

Great also is the need of creative living. Some of you will return to small towns where the horizon is somewhat narrow, and the thinking is somewhat provincial, and the standards of taste, both moral and æsthetic, are somewhat crude. What need for creative living! And what an opportunity yours will be to create a world vision where now there is only a small-town vision, or to develop an interest in art, and architecture, and music, and good literature where now cultural interests are almost, if not quite, non-existent.

Nor is an opportunity for creative living afforded only to college graduates. It lies in the path of every one of us. Not yet does the world believe in Christianity—even that portion of it which calls itself Christian. What will convince it of the truth of that which the Jesus of history really stood for, lived and died for? What will convince it that love, and love alone, has redemptive power? What will persuade it to surrender its trust in reeking tube and iron shard, and to rely, for its security, upon intelligently directed good will? What will persuade it to surrender the profit motive and to risk the service motive? Sermons? No! If Christianity could have been made convincing by ser-

mons, men would have accepted it long ago. Is it not becoming increasingly clear that there is but one thing under heaven which can make Christianity appear convincing, and that is an actual illustration of Jesus' way of life? Christianity has been preached for centuries, and many even of the world's high-placed ecclesiastics are not ready to take it seriously. It remains for Christianity to be lived. One man in our modern world who has dared to live Christianity—I refer, of course, to Mahatma Gandhi—has done more to convince the world of the practicability of the Sermon on the Mount than have all the discourses that have been delivered in Christian churches for a generation. In many communities, certainly, we have reached the point where further discussion of Christian principles will do little good unless some persons take it upon themselves to apply them. What is needed now is not exposition, merely, but demonstration.

VI

Many of us have reached a real crisis in our lives. We see pretty clearly what the real issue is. We realize that we must choose between the possessive life and the creative life. Do we realize how much our choice will involve? Not only our own but our children's future is at stake. If we found a home on the principle of the possessive life, our children will grow up in the belief that a man is worth as much as he possesses. If we found a home on the principle of the creative life, our

children will grow up in the belief that a man is worth as much as he produces. And what is finally at stake is the fate of our civilization. Will civilization slip or plunge into some black abyss as the result of an increasingly desperate scramble for material possessions? Or will it slowly but surely climb to the sunlit heights of the City of God as the result of increasingly splendid adventures in creative living?

XX

THE SPIRITUAL FOUNDATION OF PEACE

You have noticed perhaps that peace is almost, if not quite, the most violent subject on which anyone to-day is speaking. A meeting called for the purpose of discussing peace is very apt to end in something that sounds like a row. Could anything be more deliciously funny than the pugilistic fashion in which a thoroughgoing pacifist will fight for peace? Why is it that "peace" is such a militant matter? Is it not because it involves certain mental attitudes and emotional reactions which divide human beings far more radically than do oceans, deserts, mountain ranges, political frontiers, or epidermic colorations?

Some of us believe that one of the imperative needs of the immediate future is another international conference called for the purpose of securing a reduction of armaments, of every kind, if possible to the dimensions of a national police force. We have come to the conclusion reached by Major General F. B. Maurice, of the British General Staff, that "so long as the nations prepare for war they will have war." The trouble with military preparations for peace is that they are never understood by your neighbors. You try to assure them that there is no reason for them to feel alarmed; your intentions are perfectly peaceful. They, in turn,

attempt to assure you that there is no reason for you to feel alarmed; their intentions are perfectly peaceful. But you do not believe them; nor do they believe you. In a world in which everybody is determined to carry a gun or two nobody trusts anybody. So you and your neighbors enter into a mad race for *physical* supremacy, and the race gets madder and madder until at last human nature can no longer endure the strain; then there is war.

But does anybody believe that even complete, universal disarmament would of itself secure permanent, universal peace? You may have no ships and no guns; but so long as you have factories and raw materials and *the will to fight*, you can fight. If you have no ships, you can build them; if you have no guns, you can manufacture them.

Some of us believe, further, that there is need to-day for some sort of international organization of which the United States shall be a part. If the nations do not move forward into a league of nations, they will move backward into old-fashioned alliances and balances of power; and the absolutely certain result of that move would be another disastrous war. A world that has been organized for war must be *organized* for peace. But the increasing usefulness of the present League of Nations, or of any league of nations, will depend upon what? Upon the character of the men who constitute its personnel, the character of the governments which they represent, and the character of the peoples who lift up governments or pull them down.

So, when one begins to think soberly about this greatest of all problems, he can hardly escape the conclusion that peace rests, at last, upon a spiritual foundation—the minds and hearts of men.

I

It rests, for one thing, upon faith. William James once used the illustration of a mountain climber who comes to a great crevasse which he is obliged to cross. Will he be able to leap it? That depends. If he doubts his ability to do so, he will not be able to leap it; his doubt will unnerve him. But if, summoning all his faith, he says, "I can," he will!

Will the sons of men ever be able to outlaw war and establish peace? That depends. If they go about saying, "It can't be done," it won't be done. Neither the Eighteenth Amendment nor the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States was written by people who went about saying, "It can't be done." And it is, I should say, an absolutely safe bet that so long as men *think* they can't get rid of war they won't get rid of it. But if, some day, they make up their minds that war is not inevitable, any more than dueling or piracy or slavery was inevitable, and begin to say, "To hell with war!" to hell it will go.

There is need to-day for a reorientation of religious faith. In times past any man who could recite without mental reservations the historic creeds of Christendom was accounted a man of faith,

even though he could also say (without mental reservations) that the human race needs a good war about once in every generation to eliminate a surplus population. Any man, likewise, who could say that he believed the Bible was accounted a man of faith. Under cross-examination he might be obliged to confess that there were certain portions of it which he had never read, and certain other portions which he did not understand, and certain other portions—the Sermon on the Mount, for instance—whose ethical teaching he was not ready to put into practice. But if he could say with all the fervor of a Methodist revivalist that he believed "the old Book from cover to cover," he was accepted as a man of faith, even though he also believed that war is inevitable.

Would not a far more vital test of religious faith be some such question as this: Do you believe that it is possible so to organize the world's economic and political life as to secure justice among nations and a permanent peace?

II

To faith must be added knowledge. "Where there is no vision," says an old Hebrew proverb, "the people perish." They do. In our time we have seen them do it. In the Europe of 1913 there was, on the part of the masses of the people, no vision; no understanding of such matters as "economic concessions," "spheres of influence," "favored nation rights," etc. And so the people perished. By the millions they perished, led on by kindling watch-

words and glowing ideals which, since the signing of the Armistice, have been quietly ignored or cynically repudiated by the war-makers. Where there is no vision the people perish—in vain.

But are we the people willing to pay the price of vision? Are we willing, for instance, to make a dispassionate inquiry as to the underlying causes of the Great War? A clergyman whose opinions on the subject of evolution were violently different from those entertained by Charles Darwin, walked one day into a bookstore, and there, on a display counter, he saw a copy of *The Origin of Species.* He rapped the offending book angrily with his knuckles, and said to the poor, frightened clerk behind the counter, "There's a man to whom I have given many a good drubbing in my pulpit; and, thank God, I've never read a single word he ever wrote!" How many of us, since the signing of the Armistice, have read a single authoritative volume dealing with the *causes*, not merely the eleventh-hour *occasion*, of the war?

It is a very disturbing fact that most people are still thinking in terms of war-time propaganda. The legend of the sole guilt of the German nation is still widely believed. On this premise was built a peace which has been only less disastrous than the war. And from this premise have sprung fears and hates which, unless they can in some way be overcome, will certainly plunge Europe, if not the world, into another war. The materials for a truer understanding of what happened in 1914 are

now at hand. Gooch's *History of Modern Europe*, and Fay's *New Light on the Origins of the War*—to mention only two important studies—are now accessible. But how many people will go to the trouble of reading them? And how many people, fed up on war-time propaganda, would give serious consideration to the evidence which they supply if they did read them? Victims of atrocity stories manufactured for the purpose of keeping up a fighting morale, we have not yet reached the point where we are willing to know the truth that would open our eyes to the underlying causes of war, and so enable us to deal with war as scientifically and successfully as we have dealt with the hook-worm and yellow fever.

III

To faith must be added knowledge, and to knowledge an unselfish spirit.

Here is a significant tale that has been told to the world by a brilliant and honest Englishman.[1] Among the many new territories which Great Britain has permitted the League of Nations to assign to her as mandates is a little island in the Pacific Ocean called Naura—rich, of course, in something or other. (If you have any kind of natural wealth these days, almost any nation will take you on as a mandate; but if, like poor Armenia, you have neither coal nor iron nor rubber nor oil, but only children, nobody wants you, you have only to go out into the world's garden and eat

[1] G. Lowes Dickinson, *Causes of International War*, p. 96. Published by Harcourt, Brace and Howe.

worms!) Naura is rich in phosphates, and according to the spirit, if not the letter, of Article XXII of the League of Nations Covenant, these phosphates ought to be offered on equal terms to all the nations that belong to the League. As a matter of fact, they are being offered only to the United Kingdom and Australia and New Zealand, unless there is a surplus beyond what they require, and these countries may buy them at cost of production.

"Here," says G. Lowes Dickinson, the teller of the tale, "is a clear case of economic imperialism of the worst sort. A territory is seized by war, and then the political power of the state seizing it is employed to give that state a preferential claim on its principal raw material, so that it can either exclude all other nations altogether, or charge them a monopoly price." Such a policy, he continues, is "a war policy, for it shows every state that its only security for access to raw materials is to seize and occupy the territory where they are to be found."

When the bill calling for this disposition of the phosphates of Naura was being debated in the House of Commons, one of the members speaking in support of it said, "On the matter of the League of Nations, I think it is a violation of the Covenant, but on the ground of imperial needs, and the necessity for procuring this tremendous and vital product, I shall be inclined to support the government." And Mr. Dickinson closes his recital thus: "O

young men, dead in your millions, for what, then, and for whom has your blood been shed?"

I am retelling this story, not for the purpose of giving one more twist to the British Lion's sadly twisted tail, but solely for the purpose of suggesting the motive which, in greater or less degree, has determined the policies of every nation under the sun. If the skirts of America are a bit more clean than the skirts of certain other nations, is it because we Americans are more unselfish than other peoples, or because not yet have we been so terribly tempted as the older nations have been? But in the judgment of many well-informed persons America's testing time has come. And now, what will the American attitude be? Will we adopt as our national slogan, "America first!" and as our national anthem "Let the Rest of the World Go By," and as our national policy a determination to promote our own economic interests at whatever cost to the economic welfare of other peoples? Or will we see and say that the time has come when the basic needs of every nation must become the common concern of all nations, and so endeavor to establish a new and nobler tradition in the field of international relationships?

The tendency at this point is to think of America as an abstraction, a kind of idealized figure that exists apart from the American people—you and me and our next-door neighbors. So thinking, we can imagine America playing the part of the good Samaritan, even though individual Americans may

be taking the rôle of the priest and the Levite, not to mention the thieves! But America, of course, has no existence apart from Americans; and if you cannot make silken purses out of sows' ears, neither can you make an unselfish nation out of selfish nationals. A big-brotherly America can never be apart from big-brotherly Americans. If I want my country to establish some new and nobler tradition in its behavior toward other countries, both large and small, I myself must become the kind of personality I want my country to be.

IV

To faith must be added knowledge, to knowledge unselfishness, and to unselfishness a just regard for the present rights and future development of the colored races.

It is trite, but true and important, to say that the world has become a vast neighborhood in which not only nations but races must learn to live together under mutually advantageous conditions, or perish miserably in a neighborhood brawl. What is pictured in Hollywood is seen in Tokyo—not always to the moral advantage of the Japanese. What is spoken in Chicago is heard in Shanghai. What is done in London is felt in Calcutta. What is whispered in the ear in the inner chambers of the chancelleries of Europe and of America becomes a topic of conversation for the educated portion of the Orient. In such a world, if there is ever to be a permanent peace, race hatred must

die, and the exploitation of economically weak races by economically strong races must come to an end. A radically different attitude on the part of white men toward colored men must be developed.

In most churches to-day women enjoy the same privileges as men. There are, however, a few religious communities in which woman's participation in the government of the church is one of the "burning questions." It is reported that in one such community a clergyman argued that one certain reason for believing that a woman is inferior to a man in respect of her religious functions is because God the Father, as everyone knows, belongs to male sex! However shocking this may sound, it probably represents the deep and undiscourageable conviction of a certain type of masculine mind. And I sometimes wonder whether there are not many communities in which people commonly think of God, not only as a magnified man, but as a magnified white man, and more particularly still, as a magnified Englishman, who came to America in the Mayflower, and, as quickly as possible, moved to Boston, where he has been living in cultivated seclusion ever since.

A well-known "missionary" hymn contains these tell-tale lines:

> "What though the spicy breezes
> Blow soft o'er Ceylon's isle;
> Though every prospect pleases,
> And only man is vile?"

Beautiful Ceylon, with its spicy breezes; beautiful India, with its Taj Mahal; beautiful Japan, with its Mount Fuji; beautiful China, with its wooded hills and fertile valleys—where the scenery is simply beautiful to the Western eye, and only the natives are vile! Translate this hymn into Hindoostani, or into Japanese, or into any one of the Chinese dialects; ask Oriental "Christians" to sing, "Where every prospect pleases, and only we and our brothers and sisters and fathers and mothers and aunts and uncles are vile"—and see how much progress you do not make in the direction of world-wide peace.

As another example of the typical white attitude, consider this:

> "Take up the white man's burden;
> Send forth the best ye breed.
> Go bind your sons to exile,
> To serve your captives' need;
> To wait in heavy harness
> On fluttered folk and wild,
> Your new caught, sullen peoples,
> Half devil, and half child."

There you have it, Rudyard Kipling, Western imperialism, Victorian piety, white world supremacy—the whole precious combination with its terrific threat to the future of mankind.

You need only to put yourself in the other man's place to realize the sting of such utterances as these. Bad enough they must sound even to intelligent Orientals who have never visited the West. How insufferably bad they must sound to

intelligent, highly educated Orientals who have visited the West, and walked through the slums of London or Liverpool or New York or Chicago. Speaking generally—there are, of course, exceptions—the white peoples of the world have looked upon the colored peoples of the world not only through the eyes of a patronizing condescension but through the eyes of a greed that has been naked and unashamed. They have asked not, "How can we help these brothers of a darker hue to make their fullest contribution to a common civilization?" but, "How can we extract from these undeveloped lands and backward peoples the maximum amount of wealth for ourselves?" Is it, then, to be wondered at that now, in the hour of the white world's agony, the colored peoples are beginning to hope? That a leading representative of the brown race is saying, "Let us hold firm, each for all, and let us hope, hope, hope!" Hope for what? That another death grapple on the part of jealous, suspicious, competing white groups may bring to an end the white man's supremacy, and give to the colored man his longed-for chance?

Here, surely, is food for reflection. And will not reflection lead us to the conclusion that the time has come to drop the typical white attitude of inherent, everlasting superiority, and to learn to see in the man of color, not a "burden" but a brother? The missionary task of the nineteenth century was to carry the gospel of Christ to races that had never heard it. The missionary task of

the twentieth century—the task too of practical statesmanship—is to put the spirit of Christ into every racial relationship.

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